METRO / A25

Cops file charges against Basilan mayor for Batasan bombing

BUSINESS / B1

Imports jumped 8.9% to $4.74B in Sept. due to global oil price hike

ACROSS / A17

70 dead of infection from fish worm; entire Zambo village hit

DepEd announces no classes today in preschool in Metro Manila, to make further announcements at 4 a.m. today

RP-Spain convict swap treaty helps Larrañaga

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

IN A MOVE LIKELY TO SWEETEN THE welcome for President Macapagal-Arroyo in Madrid next week, the Philippine Senate has ratified a prisoners exchange treaty with Spain that could pave the way for the

RP-SPAIN/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, November 28, 2007 ★★★ 13 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 353 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Please don't eat shoes; man jailed for 'Jolilbee'

By Leila B. Salaverria

BAKA KASI MALITO ANG MGA TAO AT KAININ YUNG SAPATOS!

FIRST TO BECOME A Pinoy favorite was Jollibee Yum Burger, followed by Jollibee Chicken Joy and then

PLEASE/ A22

UN: AFP behind killings

Report rejects RP claim of Red purge

"STRIKINGLY UNCONVINCING" IS HOW A United Nations special rapporteur has dismissed the claim of Philippine authorities that the extrajudicial killings of leftist activists were a result of internal purges in the communist ranks.

Philip Alston, an Australian academic assigned by the UN Human Rights Council to look into the executions that have drawn international outrage, said in his final report released on Monday that the Armed Forces of the Philippines had killed leftist activists as part of a campaign against communist insurgents.

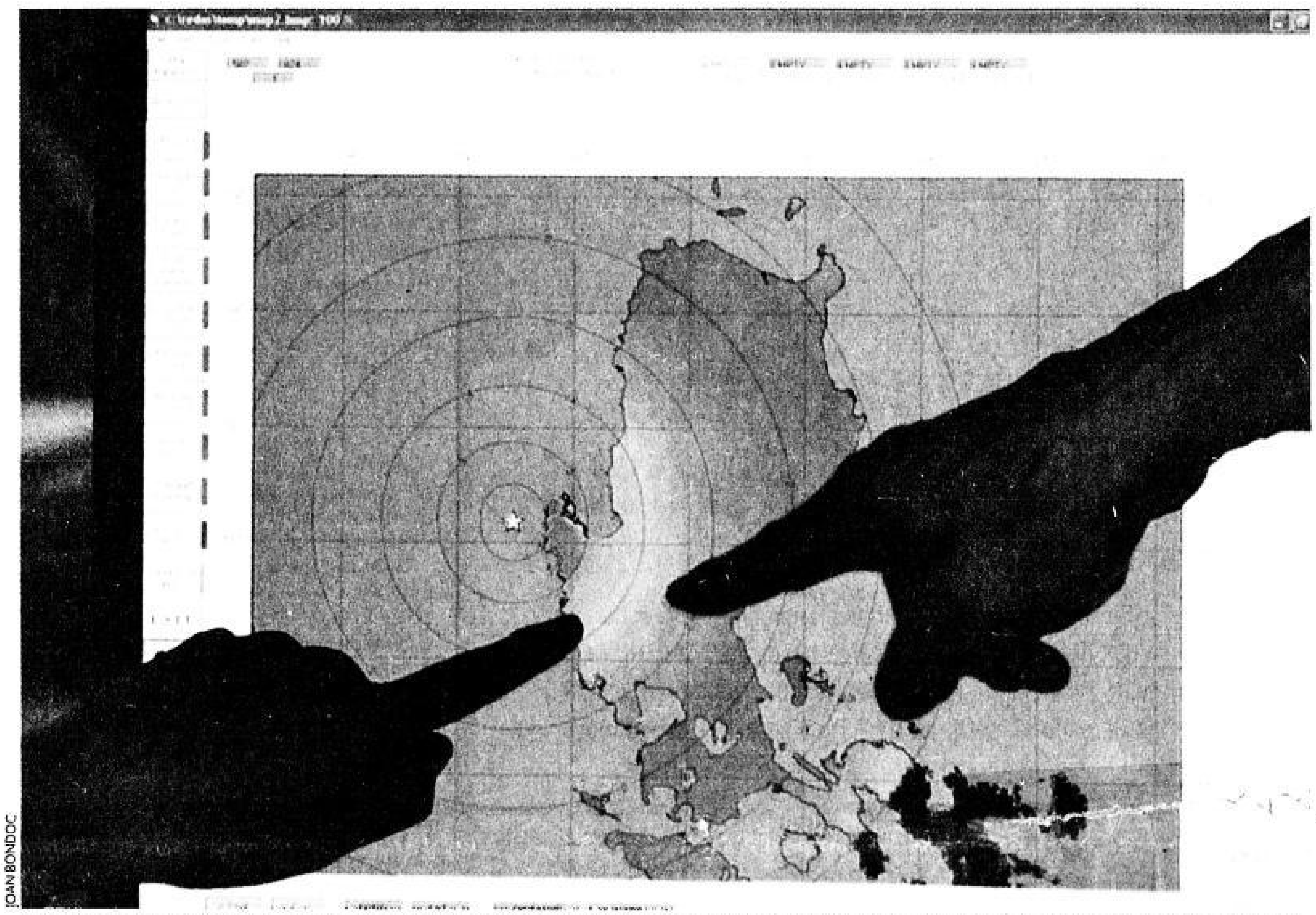
"In some parts of the country, the Armed Forces have followed a deliberate strategy of systematically hunting down the leaders of leftist organizations," said Alston, a professor of law at New York University.

He said the executions had "eliminated civil society leaders, including human rights defenders, trade unionists and land reform advocates, intimidated a vast number of civil society actors, and narrowed the

UN: AFP/ A23

PHILIP ALSTON
High Commissioner, for
Human Rights Rapporteur

THE FINAL REPORT from Philip Alston, Human Rights Rapporteur



JOAN BONDOC

HANDS ON: Jane Punongbayan, supervising science research specialist of Phivolcs, marks the epicenter of the tremor which originated from a fault in the South China Sea 86 km northwest of Lingayen, Pangasinan.

Quake jolts Cabinet meet; GMA asks about 'apos'

By Lyn Rillon, Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

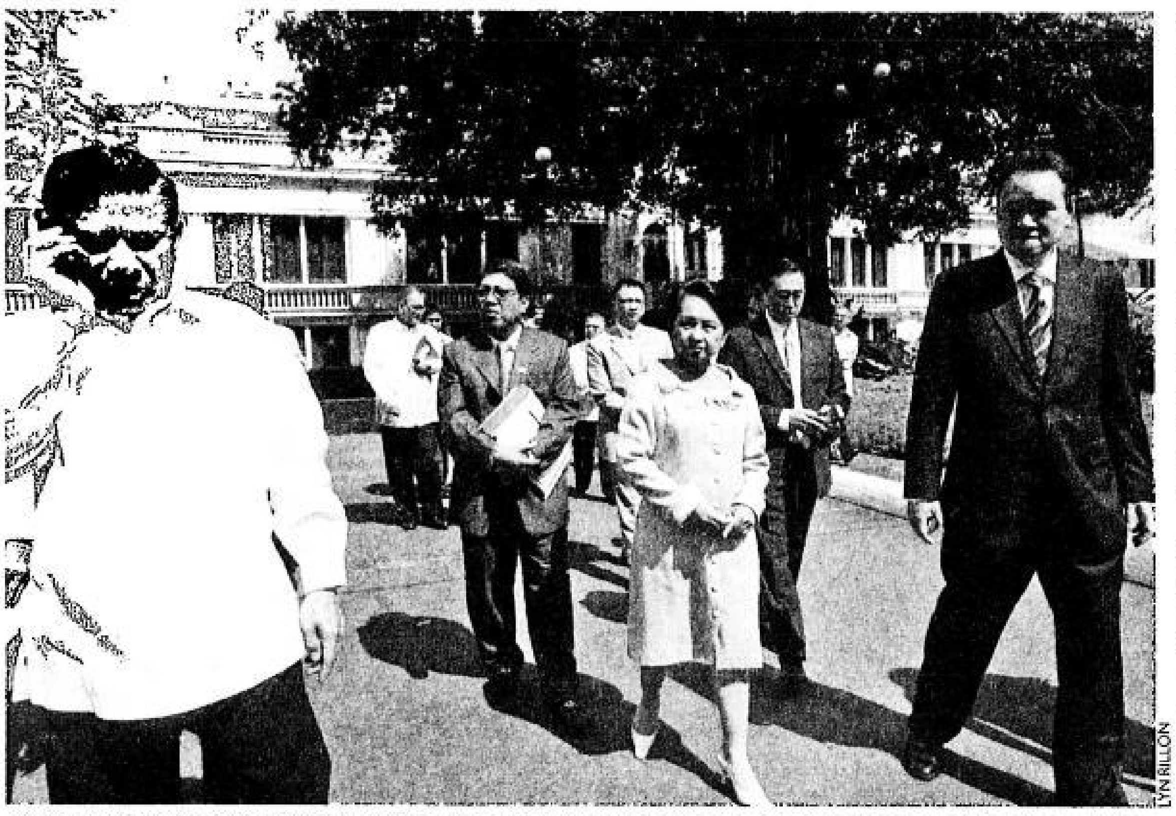
PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO was calm in the wake of yesterday's 5.4 magnitude earthquake, but wanted to know how her grandchildren were doing.

Minutes after the 12:26 p.m. quake, media and in-house photographers rushed up Malacañang's grand staircase to see what had happened to the President and Cabinet officials still closeted in the Aguinaldo State Dining Room for the meeting of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) and the Bicol Calamity Assistance and Rehabilitation Effort Commission.

The INQUIRER met a Palace cameraman who had been in the reception area and who witnessed the three heavy chandeliers swaying from their moorings on the ceiling.

In the State Dining Room, the

QUAKE JOLTS/ A22



LYN RILLON

MARATHON MEETINGS INTERRUPTED: Quake rudely interrupts President Arroyo who was holding disaster-driven meetings. Ms Arroyo leads her Cabinet out of centuries-old Palace toward the hopefully safer Premier Guest House.

Senate forcibly opens ZTE safe, gets papers

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE SENATE BLUE RIBBON committee yesterday forcibly opened a safe and seized annexes to the recently aborted $329-million National Broadband Network contract with China's ZTE Corp.

It took only a few moments for personnel of the Senate Office of the Sergeant at Arms, on the orders of Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, to pry open the safe surrendered by ZTE and containing the two voluminous annexes. Cayetano chairs the committee.

Senate personnel took the safe to a parking lot in full view of the media and opened it using a number-combination to unlock it.

Inside were two thick blue folders, Annex A and Annex B of the National Broadband Network (NBN) supply contract to electronically link the Philippine bureaucracy down to the remotest barangay.

President Macapagal-Arroyo

SENATE/ A6

Miriam suspects kickbacks in rush sale of power assets

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL Power Commission (JCPC) yesterday said that kickbacks running into millions of pesos could be driving "certain public officials" to rush the sale of state assets in the power industry sector.

"The Epira (Electric Power Industry Reform Act) orders the privatization of the power industry, but we must make haste slowly. If we don't watch out, those sales could adversely result both in higher electric rates paid by consumers, and in multimillion kickbacks and commissions for certain public officials involved," said JCPC

MIRIAM/ A9

Storms weaken; heavy rains forecast today

By TJ Burgonio and Inquirer Northern Luzon

TWO STORMS THAT HAD triggered the evacuation of nearly half a million people lost much of their power yesterday after leaving a combined total of 26 villagers dead in Luzon and the Visayas.

Tropical Storm "Lando," which returned to the country the other day after making an initial exit last week, yesterday slackened off to a tropical depression before its expected landfall in Mindoro.

Lando brought bursts of rain to Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and the Bicol region last night.

Initially packing 175 kilometers per hour center winds, Typhoon "Mina" weakened to a storm with sustained winds of 65 kph as it neared the tip of northern Luzon.

STORMS/ A22

DISCONNECTS IN EDUCATION

Larger number of boys than girls drop out by Grade 5

By Juan Miguel Luz

(Last of three parts)

(Editor's note: The writer is president of the NGO International Institute of Rural Reconstruction and former education undersecretary.)

COMMENTARY

IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, GETTING girls through high school to complete their basic education is a major concern. In the Philippines, the reverse is the case.

From Grades 5 through the end of high school, boys are dropping out 2 to 2.5 times more than girls. More girls are graduating from high school than boys. The real concern is how to keep boys in school.

The Philippines may be one of the most gender-free nations when it comes to education. Except in the Muslim areas, girls' enrollment in basic education is equal to boys' enroll-

LARGER/ A21

Pockets of hope for Muslim schoolchildren

MINDANAO LAGS BEHIND THE rest of the country in terms of education and other indicators. Within the island, however, areas with significant Muslim-Filipino populations lag even further behind non-Muslim areas.

We are already appalled by the poor education indicators for the country. For the Philippines, only 67 percent of all kids entering Grade 1 make it to Grade 6. In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), however,

POCKETS/ A21

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Batanes will experience stormy weather. Southern Luzon and the Babuyan Group of Islands will have rains and gusty winds . The rest of Northern Luzon and Western Visayas will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Gusty Winds	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Gusty Winds	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Gusty Winds	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

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(In exact order)

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening

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6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN

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₱9,104,383.80

Be patient, House tells traders

GMA to convene advisory body to spur passage of needed bills

By Christian V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

A SENIOR LEADER OF THE House of Representatives yesterday asked foreign and local businessmen to be more patient with the passage of keenly awaited bills touching on key areas like customs and land administration.

"Congress does not operate like a mill," Majority Leader Arthur Defensor told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "In a democracy, the legislature also suffers from the consequences of rhetoric and debate."

Defensor assured the business community that the lower chamber—at least—would not need six months to deliver on its legislative promises. He said the job should be done by January or February next year.

"Many of these bills are not controversial anyway so we don't expect a lot of debates," he said.

At the same time, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would convene the Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) upon her return from her European trip.

The President is set to leave on Dec. 1 to visit Spain and the United Kingdom.

"So that the passage [of bills] will be faster, we will convene the Ledac when I return from Europe to resolve whatever obstacles... These measures are really needed by the people," Ms Arroyo said.

It was the President's reaction to the call made the other day by the Makati Business Club (MBC) whose members criticized the Palace for not pushing hard enough for some bills that the group had sought for immediate passage.

Before the break

Defensor, who also heads the committee on rules which calendars bills and resolutions, said the lower house could pass some of the bills before the 14th Congress adjourns on Dec. 22 for the Christmas break.

He did not say, however, which of the bills—other than the cheaper medicines bill—would see the light of day before the holiday lull. The bill was set to be passed on third and final reading yesterday or today.

"We want to assure the businessmen that we are aware of their concerns," he said. "We are doing our best to remain on track."

Defensor said all the measures being sought by the foreign and local business communities were a "priority" of the government.

Parallel measures

He reminded groups such as the American and European Chambers of commerce in the Philippines that these bills were at the top of the list of the Ledac.

Based on records of the House bills and index section, most of these bills involved parallel measures filed by several congressmen.

Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara, for instance, is the principal author of at least five bills covering the Credit Information System Act and amendments to the Pre-Need Code, Land Administration Reform Act and Tourism Act.

Besides these measures, the businessmen are also keen on the passage of bills amending the Renewable Energy Act and the Customs Brokers Act.

2008 budget

The President said she would convene the Ledac so that executive officials and legislators could discuss how to speed up the approval of key bills, including those "crucial for business expansion," that remain languishing in Congress.

She made the statement yesterday during the meeting with officials of the National Disaster Coordinating Council-Bicol Calamity Assistance and Rehabilitation Effort Commission in Malacañang.

Ms Arroyo thanked Congress for focusing its attention on passage of the proposed P1-trillion budget for 2008 and other important measures.

"Millions of our people are waiting for these measures that would provide cheaper medicine, low electricity bills, amnesty for rebels and programs for development in the 2008 budget," the President said in Filipino.

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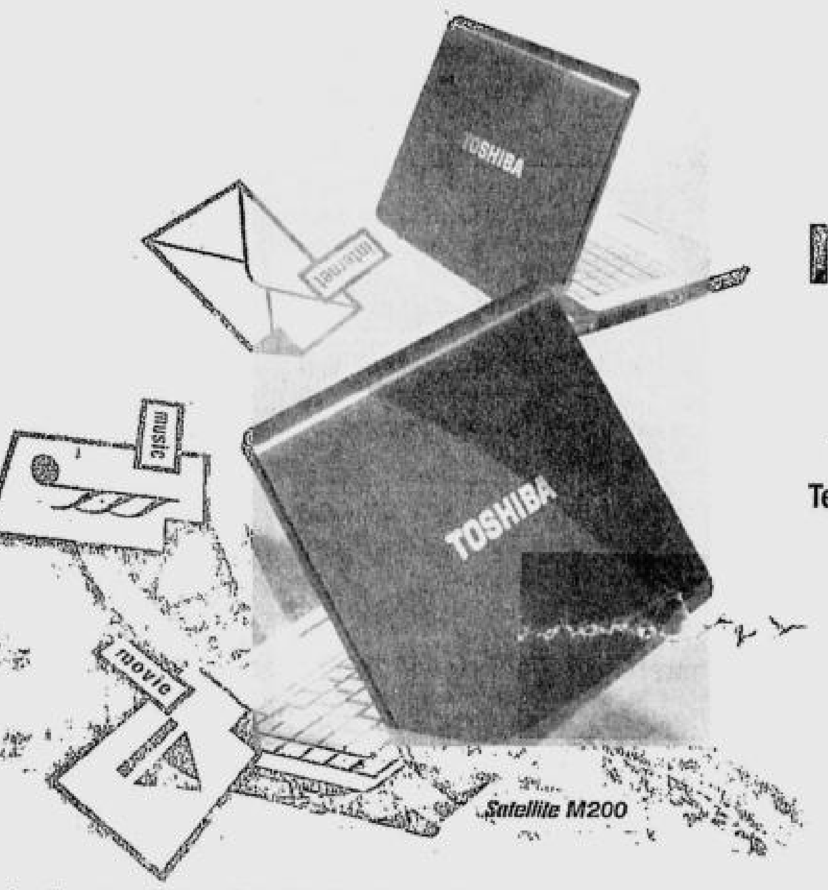

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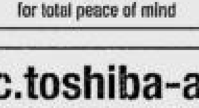
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No pressure, just hints, on JDV behest case – Sabio

PCGG CHAIR CAMILO SABIO said the behest loan case against Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. was a matter of interest to a number of people but stressed he was not being pressured into pursuing the case.

"Several people called my attention to it," over the years, and eventually he felt compelled to revisit it, requesting for the documents on the case, Sabio told a press briefing.

When reporters pressed him to say who had encouraged him to check on the De Venecia case, Sabio declined, saying "there are limits to transparency and good governance. Maybe it's not good governance."

Sabio confirmed the other day that he had written Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera recommending the revival of the civil case in the Sandiganbayan against De Venecia for failure to pay $120 million worth of "behest" loans taken out 20 years ago.

The case involves Landoil Corp., a company that pioneered the export of Filipino manpower and construction projects in the Middle East, which De Venecia founded in the 1970s and headed until 1985.

To finance its huge overseas operations, the company borrowed enormous amounts from foreign banks which required a government guarantee, which it got from the state-owned Philguarantee Corp.

According to a civil case the Presidential Commission on Good Government filed against De Venecia in 1987, the Speaker allegedly took "undue advantage" of his ties with the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos to secure the behest loans and the government guarantee. It said that as a result of "gross mismanagement and wanton diversion of the loans," Landoil defaulted on the loan payments leaving Philguarantee to use taxpayer money to make good on its guarantee.

De Venecia's lawyer, Raul Lambino, yesterday said the Speaker and other Landoil officials were victims, not cronies, of the Marcos regime.

He said the Marcos government's takeover of the Landoil shares was done without the consent of the company's officers.

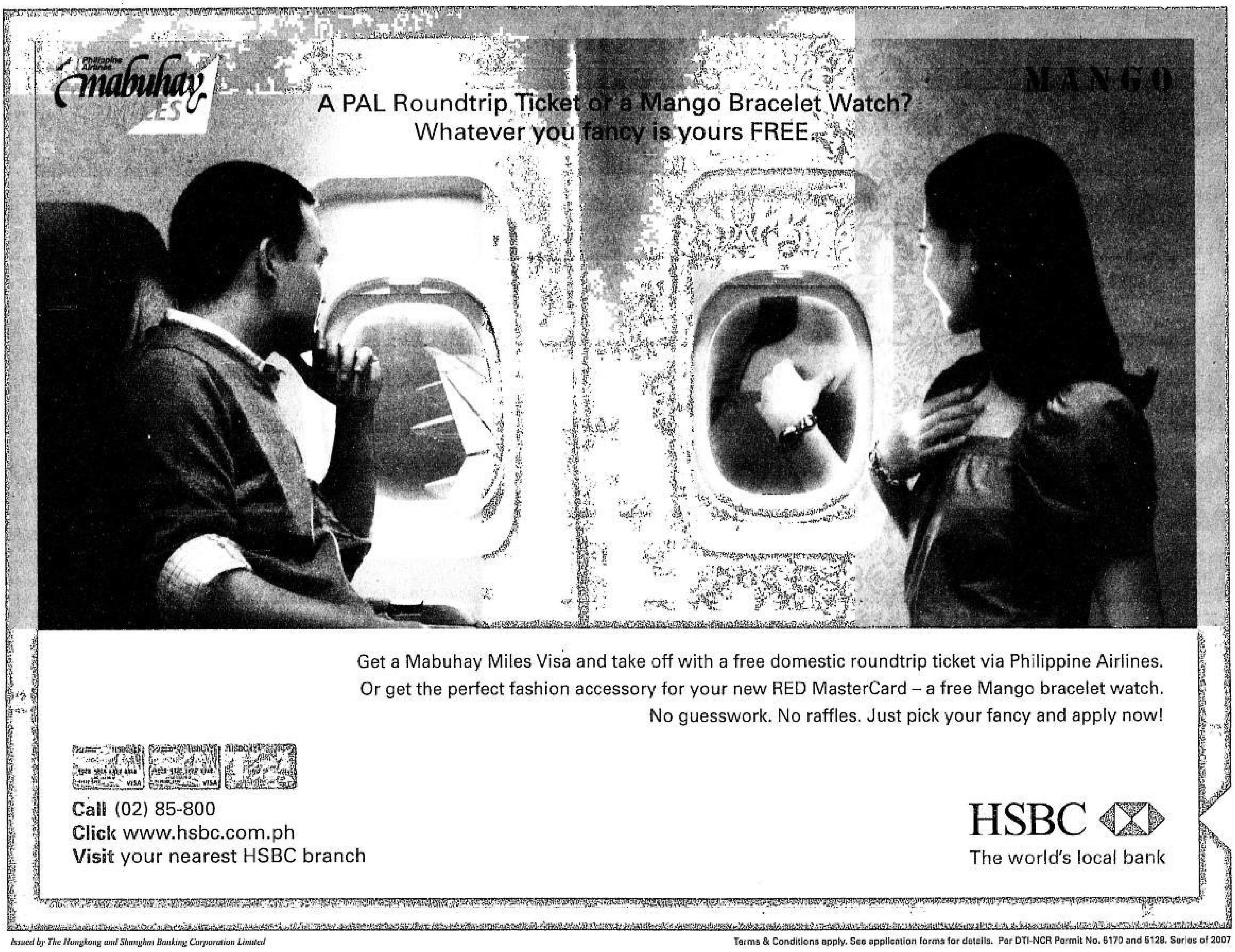
"The compromise was between PCGG and Landoil and the Speaker was not a signatory to the agreement," Lambino said.

Devanadera yesterday said there would be no politics involved in the OSG's review of the case.

"We are being requested to study the legal, so the political is not part of our study," she told reporters.

She said the OSG would study the case records and would not need to seek De Venecia's side.

But it will still be the PCGG that will make the final decision on whether De Venecia should be prosecuted. *Kristine L. Alave, Norman Bordadora and Leila B. Salaverria*



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Pinoy film about determined kids tops Venezuela festival

By Marinel R. Cruz

MES DE GUZMAN'S "ANG DAAN PATUNGONG Kalimugtong (The Road to Kalimugtong)," the tale of two Benguet children who cross mountains to get to school every day, won the Best Picture award in the recently concluded Festival de Cine de los Pueblos del Sur (Festival of Cinema of the Towns of the South) on Margarita Island in Venezuela.

"Kalimugtong" competed with 20 other films from countries like China, Spain, Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Africa and Brazil in the festival which ran from Nov. 15 to 22.

SampayBakod and Cinelarga Productions, producers of "Kalimugtong," have also sealed a TV-video distribution deal with the Venezuela-based Amazonia Distributor Films. The contract would bring "Kalimugtong" to Venezuela and other Latin American countries, said De Guzman.

"Kalimugtong" was screened twice during the weeklong festival. "People who asked me about the two lead actors couldn't believe they were first-timers," the director said.

De Guzman was referring to Analyn Bangsi-il and Rhenuel Ordono, members of Benguet's Kankana-ey tribe, whose children actually climb mountains and cross rivers to get to school every day.

The first-time thespians received Best Actress and Best Actor nominations, respectively, from the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino last year. De Guzman, together with Noel Montano, received the Urian Award for Best Production Design.

"The other filmmakers were shocked to hear that it only cost me $2,000 to make Kalimugtong, as opposed to their films, which amounted to $2 million each," De Guzman told the INQUIRER on Tuesday, a day after he arrived from a European trip.

"Kalimugtong," endorsed by the Department of Education, has been touring schools since November 2006.

Corrections

IN THE NOV. 22 ISSUE, a story on Page A5—"Why don't you just Google? Atong told"—erroneously described Charlie "Atong" Ang as a former gambling consultant to then President Joseph Estrada. Ang served as consultant to the state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

* * *

IN THE NOV. 25 ISSUE, a Metro story on Page A21—"Priest helps kids kick street habits"—misstated the location of University of Cambridge. The university is in the United Kingdom—not the United States.

* * *

IN THE NOV. 26 ISSUE, a Page A18 caption misstated the place where the photographs of two children rescuing a dog from floodwaters were taken. The photos were taken in Bustos, Bulacan—not Bustos, Manila.

* * *

IN THE NOV. 27 ISSUE, a front-page commentary—"Teachers subsidizing pupils' needs"—misstated that Malaysia's annual expenditure for a child's education is 110 times more than the Philippines' expenditure. Malaysia only spends 10 times more than what the Philippines spends on a child's education.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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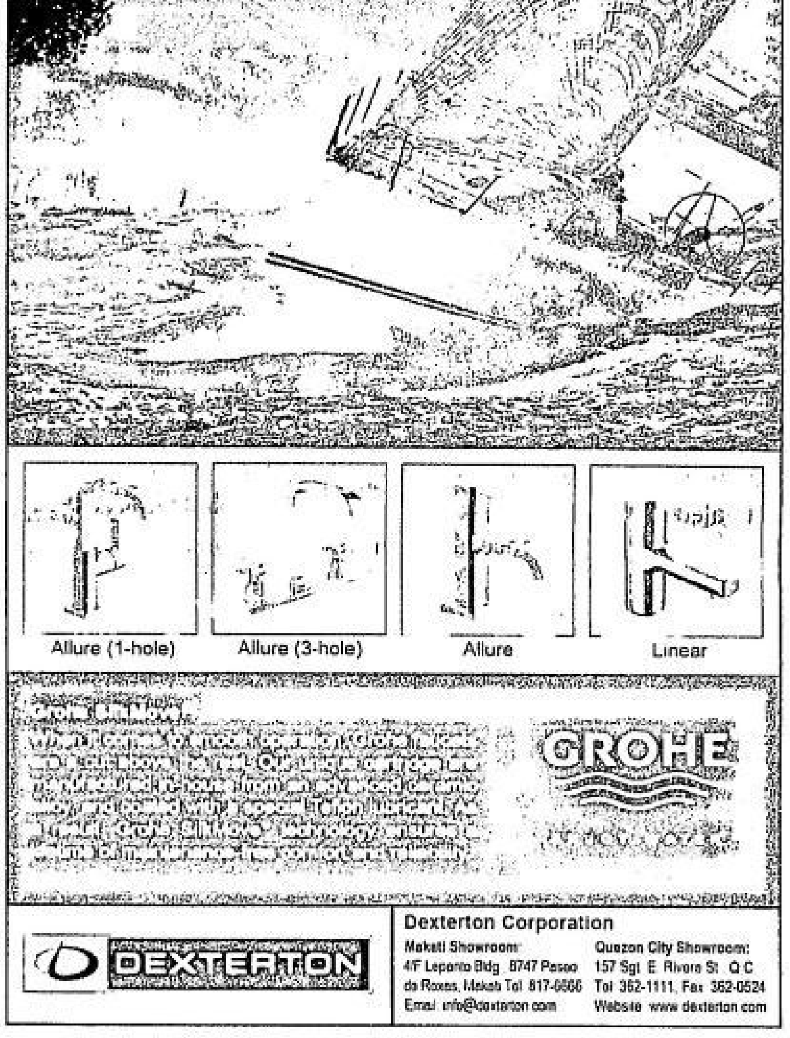

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Manila honors 'Ninoy' but no Aquino came

ONLY ONE YELLOW-SHIRTED ATTENDEE, Mayor Alfredo Lim, stood out yesterday as the heirs of martyred opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. missed the commemoration of the former senator's 75th birth anniversary in Ermita, Manila.

Lim, who was wearing a shirt in the signature color of the Aquino protest movement, said Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III skipped the wreath-laying rites at his father's statue in front of the Manila Hotel because he was "not feeling well."

Lim said it was not true that Noynoy skipped the rites because the latter felt bad that Lim was with President Macapagal-Arroyo the other day.

"Former President Cory called me to say that Noynoy had a fever," explained the oppositionist mayor of Manila, adding that Noynoy may have been tired from the Liberal Party meeting the night before.

Lim accompanied the President on a visit to the urban poor district of Isla Puting Bato in Tondo on Monday.

On Thursday, Noynoy expressed dismay at the presidential pardon granted to Sgt. Pablo Martinez, one of the 16 soldiers convicted of the 1983 assassination of Aquino.

Since Noynoy was unable to deliver his keynote speech at the ceremonies yesterday, Lim took over, telling his audience of students that Ninoy fought against repression and human rights violations during his time.

Though Ninoy was in jail for more than seven years during martial law, Lim stressed that this did not stop him from defending the people's rights.

"Why are we remembering Ninoy? Because today we can discern not very pleasant occurrences. We hope that in this time of darkness someone will emerge who will stand up for what is true and what is right," Lim said in Filipino.

Aquino was assassinated on Aug. 21, 1983, on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport as he returned from exile in the United States. Rolando Galman, the alleged gunman, was killed shortly after.

Aquino's assassination sparked a nationwide movement against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos which culminated in his ouster three years later in the first Edsa people power revolution. Aquino's widow, Cory, who won the 1986 snap election became the first president of the immediate post-Marcos era.

Lim said today's youth should study the teachings of Aquino, the eloquent freedom fighter, so they can follow in his footsteps.

"Let us emulate and study his thoughts and feelings because if we don't nothing will happen to our country and nation," he said in Filipino.

"Ninoy said 'the Filipino is worth dying for.' Is the Filipino worth defending to the death?" asked Lim and the crowd roared "Yes."

The short program ended after the Manila City chorale and band played the Aquino protesters' signature song, "Tie A Yellow Ribbon." Yellow flags bearing the Ninoy's smiling face also lined Roxas Blvd. while yellow ribbons were tied on trees and posts on some of the city's streets.

Allison W. Lopez

Death for Pinay in Kuwait

KUWAIT'S SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY confirmed the death sentence handed down on a Filipino maid convicted of murdering her employer.

The decision by the Cassation Court to uphold the ruling against Marilou Ranario is final and cannot be appealed.

In a press conference last night with Vice President Noli de Castro, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said President Macapagal-Arroyo instructed De Castro to make another trip to Kuwait within the next few days to bring her second letter of appeal to the emir.

Romulo said the execution will not be carried out until the sentence is signed by the emir, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, which will take another one or two months.

He said during this period the government will call on friendly countries to intercede in behalf of Ranario.

Ranario was sentenced to death in September 2005 for killing her 46-year-old female employer over a salary dispute and maltreatment.

Ranario, a teacher who came to Kuwait to work as a domestic helper, had said that her mistress insulted her and the Filipino people.

Cynthia D. Balana; AFP

Saguisag moved to regular room

By DJ Yap

AFTER THREE WEEKS, FORMER SEN. Rene Saguisag was finally wheeled out of the intensive care unit of the Makati Medical Center into a regular hospital room yesterday, his daughter Lara said.

"We're very pleased with his condition and take this as a sign that he's getting better," she said.

Lara, an award-winning children's author and former faculty member of the University of the Philippines, said the breathing tube attached to her father's respirator had been removed, as well as the chest tube that drained fluid from his left lung.

"He can breathe on his own now," she told the INQUIRER on the phone.

Only a feeding tube remained attached to Saguisag, who was moved out of the ICU just before 5 p.m., she said.

Saguisag sustained heavy injuries from a road accident in Makati City on Nov. 8 that killed his wife Dulce and injured two others, including their driver, Felipe Calvario.

Lara did not say what room Saguisag was in.

"We request people to still respect the privacy of the family," she said, adding that their the family would try to keep visitors to a minimum to give their father time to recover fully.

"If they are interested [to visit], of course they're welcome, but we'll limit the visitors," she said.

She appealed to the media not to take up too much of the Saguisags' private time as their father recovers. She said the family felt they were being "feasted upon" since the accident attracted a lot of media attention.

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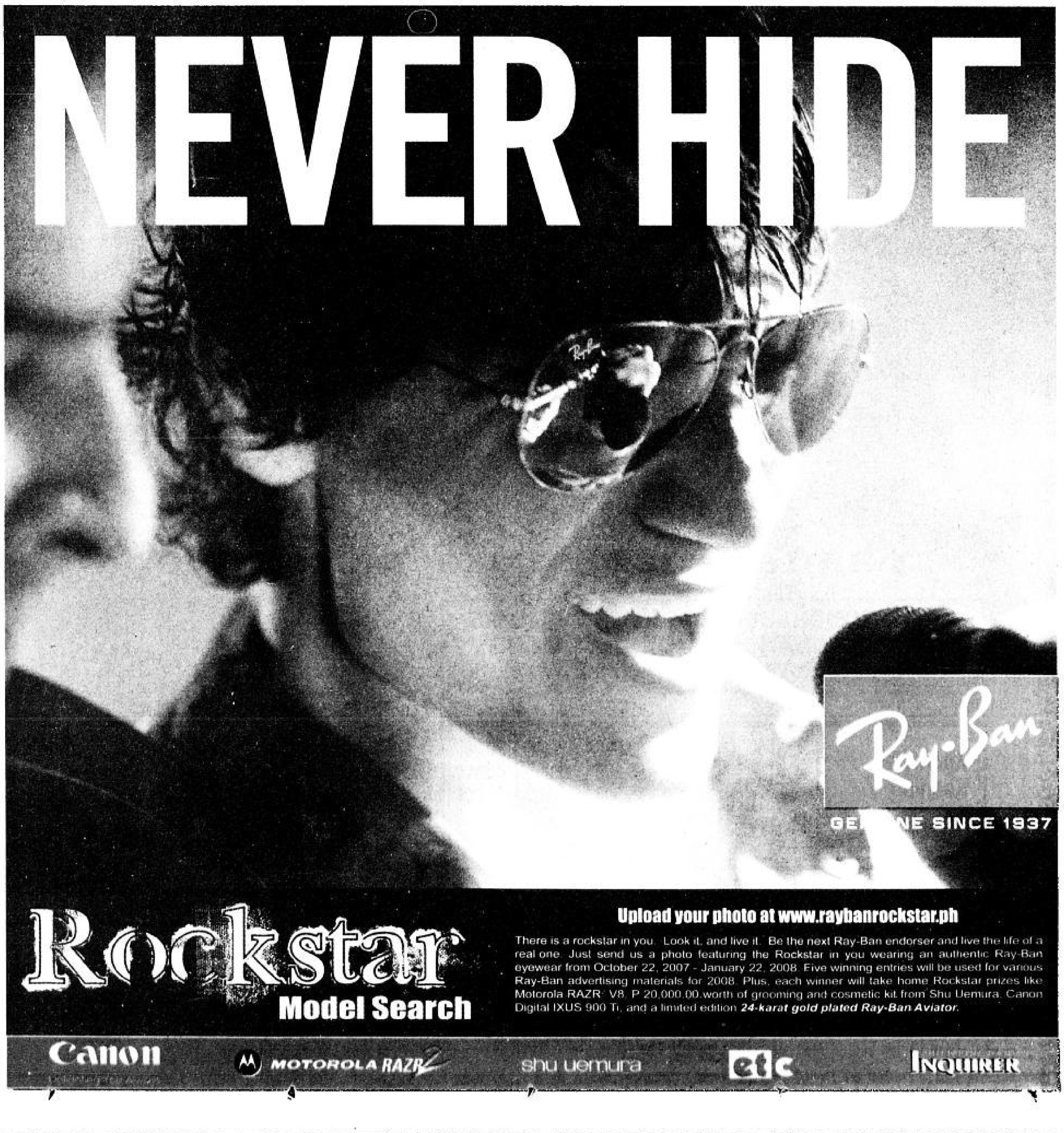
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Power bidder raps rivals for 'demonizing' Razon

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE LA COSTA GROUP OF NICKEL MINER Salvador Zamora II and former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo has no one but itself to blame for failing to qualify for the Dec. 12 bidding of the National Transmission Co. (Transco).

This was the retort of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. chair and president Walter W. Brown, who chided La Costa for "demonizing" the bidding by unfairly pounding on businessman Enrique Razon Jr.'s 2-percent interest in Monte Oro.

Razon, who is close to President Macapagal-Arroyo and was treasurer of the administration coalition Team Unity in the May elections, is chair of International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI).

La Costa has gone to court to denounce Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) for disqualifying the group from the Transco bidding.

Opposition Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Jamby Madrigal have raised the issue of conflict of interest against PSALM president Jose Ibazeta for pre-qualifying Razon's Monte Oro.

Ibazeta is a longtime director of ICTSI and its various subsidiaries.

In a letter to the INQUIRER, Brown said:

"The La Costa Group forgot a basic principle in public bidding that bidders must comply with all prequalification requirements. This particular bidder was deficient. PSALM had notified all the prospective bidders of their deficiencies, and essentially allowed them to explain and correct their deficiencies. The La Costa Group failed to correct its deficiency, despite the opportunity to do so. Therefore it was disqualified. That is the long and short of this tale."

Brown said that La Costa's move to vilify Razon after its disqualification was only a "smokescreen to hide its failure."

Razon to divest

Contrary to La Costa's claim, Razon has only a 2-percent share in Monte Oro and he is not the head of the firm, according to Brown. He said that Razon had "committed to divest from this consortium in the event it wins the bidding for Transco."

Brown said Monte Oro's biggest shareholders were State Grid of China and Monte Oro Resources & Energy Inc. (MORE), a mining and energy company owned by Wealth Securities Inc., A. Brown Co. Inc., Campos, Lanuza & Co. Inc., among others.

"Razon's small indirect shareholdings in one consortium cannot be used to demonize the whole Transco bidding process," said Brown.

In a letter to the Joint Congressional Power Commission, Ibazeta said Monte Oro had always been represented by Brown and that he was unaware whether Razon was a member of the Monte Oro consortium because "nowhere does his name appear in the documents submitted by the consortium."

No conflict of interest

"Assuming that Mr. Razon has some interest (in Monte Oro), my being a member of the board of directors (of ICTSI) where Mr. Razon is chairman does not give rise to a conflict of interest," Ibazeta said.

Since PSALM's jurisdiction covers only National Power Corp. assets and not port operations, Ibazeta said that "any directorship in this corporation is permitted."

"I only hope that this fourth attempt to privatize Transco will not fail again because of maneuvers being undertaken by a disqualified bidder and their allies in Congress," said Ibazeta.

Brown also debunked claims that the Transco bidding would be rigged due to Ibazeta and Razon's corporate ties.

He also dismissed charges by Pimentel and Madrigal that the Transco bidding was a "lutong makaw," or a charade, pointing out that there were four prequalified bidders representing different competing investors.

Other bidders prequalified along with Monte Oro were the San Miguel Energy group; the Metro Pacific Investment group with Terna-Rete Electrica Nazionale; and Citadel Holdings Inc. with Power Grid of India.

Senate ...

From page A1

canceled the NBN contract in September following allegations of overpricing and bribery that implicated her husband and forced the resignation of the deal's alleged broker, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos.

Cayetano said the annexes contained technical details of the contract, such as the price of equipment and services which they could check for any overpricing.

ZTE, through the Accra law firm, had insisted that the contract details be kept confidential by committee members, citing the need to protect proprietary rights.

But at a hearing on Nov. 20, the joint committees on blue ribbon, trade and commerce, and national defense denied ZTE's request.

Accra senior partner Rogelio Vinluan has declined to attend the hearings and also refused to give the names of the resident officers of ZTE who are in the Philippines.

Upon learning of the joint committees' decision, the Accra law firm indicated it wanted to exhaust "all possible legal remedies" to prevent the Senate from opening the safe and making copies of the contract annexes for public record.

"The release of Annexes A and B to the public will allow ZTE's competitors to discover and then copy ZTE's trade secrets through reverse engineering, to the extreme prejudice of our client," wrote Accra on Nov. 21.

But the joint committees denied the law firm's appeal.

The Department of Transportation and Communications submitted the documents to the blue ribbon committee on Sept. 25. Under the original agreement with ZTE, the documents may be inspected by the senators and their staff but may not be photocopied.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II earlier said the documents were essentially a "bill of materials and should not be subject to confidentiality." He said the materials should be subjected to third party assessment to determine any overpricing.

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Holiday sugar supply assured

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture is making sure there will be an affordable and steady supply of sugar in the coming holiday season.

It has inked a memorandum of agreement with the Confederation of Sugar Producers (Confed) to ensure that sugar prices stay within the P36-P38 per kilo range.

Under the MOA, Confed and the National Food Authority, along with the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) and its subsidiary, Philippine Sugar Corp. (Philsucor), have committed to implement the "Abot Kayang Asukal Para sa Mamamayan" program.

The program will initially run for one month to help stabilize sugar prices in Metro Manila.

4,000 bags

In the first week, Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said, "an initial 4,000 bags of sugar will be made available to Tindahan Natin outlets and NFA rolling stores."

The shipments of sugar are expected to arrive on Friday.

Philsucor, meanwhile, committed under the MOA to finance around 10,000 bags of sugar (500,000 kilos), Yap said.

"With the program in place, we can expect sugar prices to return to their previous levels of P36 to P38 a kilo within a few days," Yap said.

"Our consumers can now be assured of more affordable sugar this coming holiday season," he said.

Yap noted that while the millgate cost of sugar had dropped, retail prices in Metro Manila had remained high at P40 a kilo over the past month.

NFA label

Under the program, the NFA will sell refined sugar for not more than P36 a kilo in 1-kg bags with the NFA label.

It will not, however, allow single purchases exceeding five kilos.

Under the MOA, the SRA will also facilitate the supply of sugar in Metro Manila, as well as negotiate with sugar producers on the price of a 50-kilo bag of the commodity to be delivered to NFA warehouses.

The SRA will also designate representatives to attest to the deliveries made to NFA warehouses in Metro Manila, and monitor compliance with the program.

Member-coops

Confed, for its part, will coordinate with its member-cooperatives to supply cheap refined sugar to Metro Manila through NFA warehouses.

Under the MOA, Confed is expected to notify the SRA of all ongoing shipments and deliveries to NFA warehouses in Metro Manila on a door-to-door basis.

As stated in the MOA, Philsucor will directly pay to the sugar producers the amount corresponding to the price and quantity of sugar delivered to NFA warehouses.

The sugar will be supplied by Confed members from Negros Occidental, including First Farmers Planters Association through Dos Hermanas Multipurpose Cooperative and the VMC Farmers' Cooperative Inc.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, November 28, 2007
34th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Dn 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28
Gospel: Luke 21:12-19

Jesus said to his disciples, "People will lay their hands on you and persecute you; you will be delivered to the Jewish courts and put in prison, and for my sake you will be brought before kings and governors. This will be your opportunity to bear witness.

"So keep this in mind: Do not worry in advance about what to answer, for I will give you words and wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict.

"You will be betrayed even by parents, and brothers, by relatives and friends, and some of you will be put to death. But even though you are hated by all for my name's sake, not a hair of your head will perish. Through perseverance you will possess your own selves."

Commentary

The king uses the treasures of the temple at his party and a hand appears writing on the wall. Daniel is summoned to interpret because it is thought that the Spirit of God is within him. He doesn't want the king's gifts and informs him that he has rebelled against God, profaning the vessels and worshipping idols while ignoring the God who holds his life in his hands. Joseph ruthlessly reveals the destruction of the king's kingdom and boldly speaks in the name of God in public.

Daniel faces what Jesus warns us will happen if we speak the truth to the powers of the world—nations, governments, and even religious leaders—who have ignored the God who holds all life in his hands. But he also tells us that the Spirit of God will be with us and will give us the words, the wisdom, the courage to stand our ground in public and say what needs to be said. Even families will turn against one another (and churches) but patient endurance will save us. Who do we serve with our words?

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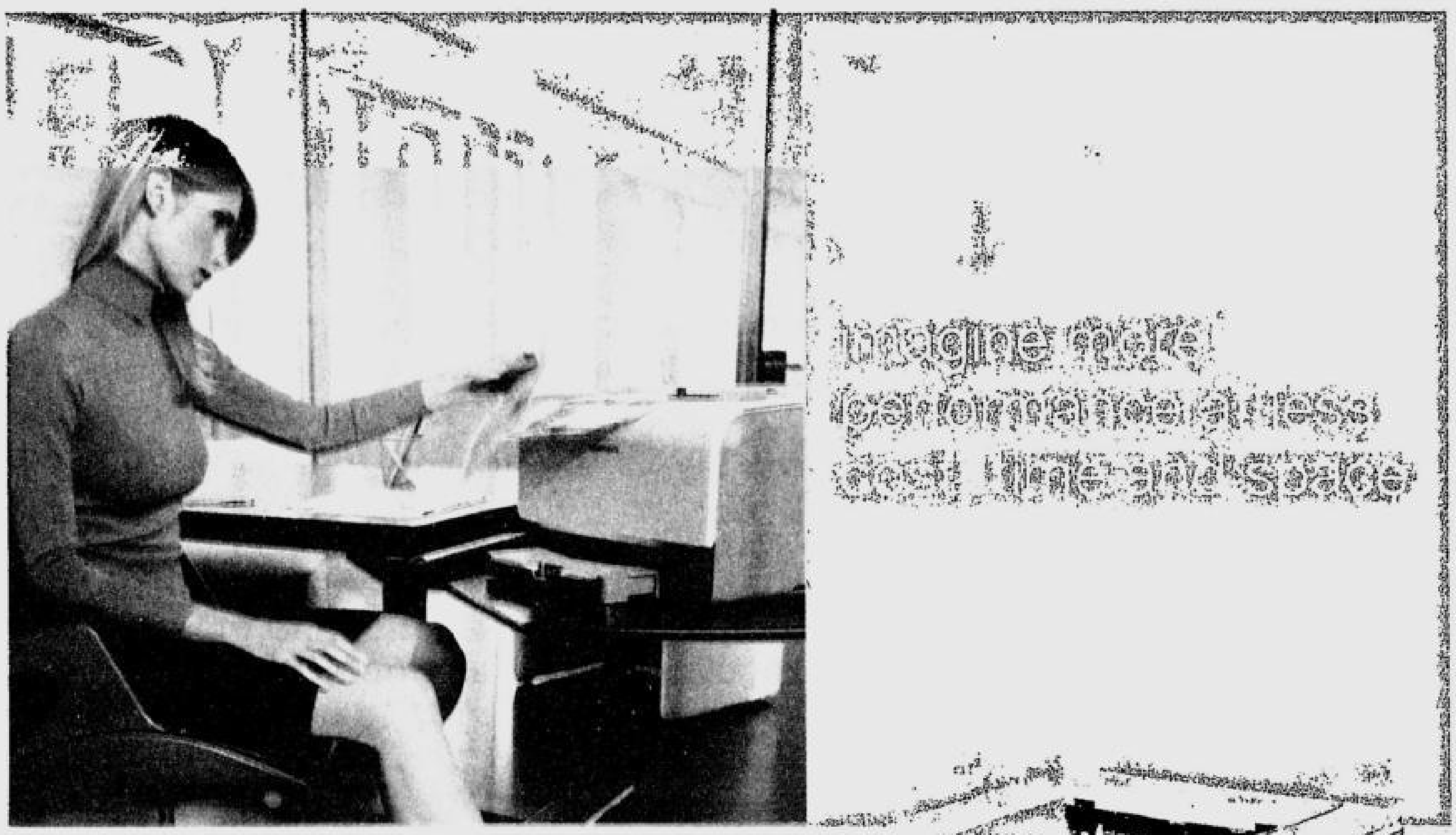

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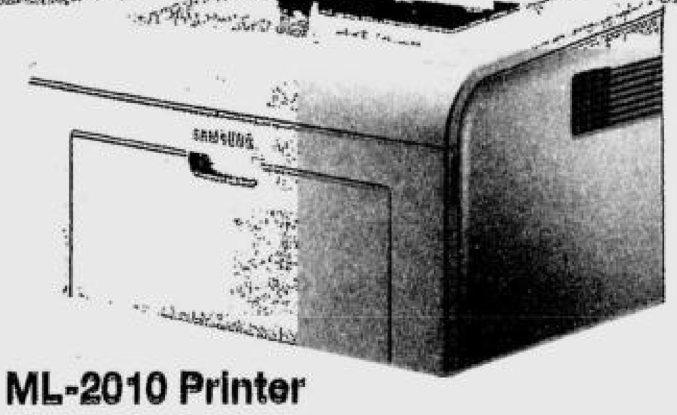
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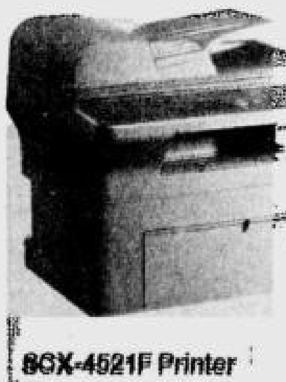
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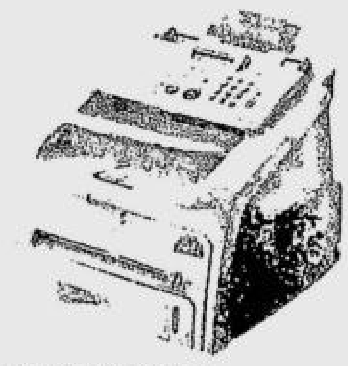
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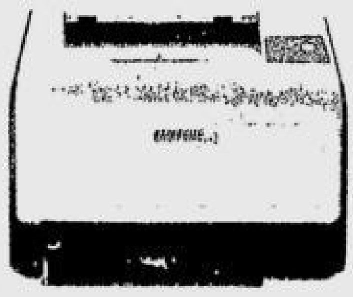
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We are now in the seventh year of this presidency that has instead reaped pain and ruin for our nation and people.

We are pained by the extrajudicial killings; by the enforced disappearances which have heightened despite the fact that this pattern of abuse was brought to the attention of the President early on, long before the outcry of concerned international officials and organizations condemned them before the world.

We are pained when billions of pesos are shamelessly diverted to serve personal political interests – such as the abrasive diversion in the fertilizer scam of public funds meant for farmers to ensure victory in the tainted 2004 presidential elections.

We are pained when demonstrators are bludgeoned by police and military men misled and emboldened by an erroneous "calibrated preemptive response" policy, a policy already declared illegal by the Supreme Court but still enforced in the Parliament of the Streets.

Worse, our values have been degraded, our collective integrity blighted by the wanton examples of bribery, graft and corruption. Parents cannot adequately answer the questions of their own children – about the ZTE, how much bribes are involved, why? They cannot answer how some Congressmen and Governors receive so much money. Who are guilty? Why do they go unpunished? What kind of justice do we have?

Neither can they answer adequately what kind of future lies ahead for their children. For they themselves see no real future. There exists no vision, no real production, no genuine people's development – only self serving assertions of a "strong republic" – whose doctors want to become nurses in order to go abroad, whose teachers are diminishing, whose farmers' and workers' future continues to slide dismally.

We cannot allow pain and ruin of the Filipino. We cannot have a nation without a soul, governance without morality. We must unite! We must struggle for Truth! For Justice! For Meaningful and Fundamental Change!

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo
Diocese of Jaro

Archbishop Oscar Cruz
Diocese of Dagupan

Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez
Diocese of Caloocan
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Bishop Solito K. Toquero
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United Church of Christ in the Philippines

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National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera ~ Bishop Dan Balais (Jesus for Philippines Movement) ~ Rev. Job Santiago (Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches) ~Mayor Jojo Binay (United Opposition) ~ Sec. Josie Lichauco ~ Dr. Carol P. Araullo (BAYAN) ~ Betina Legarda (Concerned Citizens Group) ~ Ver Eustaquio (UMDJ) ~ Rez Cortez (NCCV) ~ Paco Alcuaz (Kubol Pag-asa) ~ Enteng Romano (Black and White Movement) ~Dr. Darby Santiago (White Ribbon Movement) ~ Marie Hilao Enriquez (KARAPATAN) ~ Pastor Rey Geloagan (UCCP) ~ Father Rudy Abao MSC (KME) ~Justice Romeo T. Capulong ~ Mo. Mary John Mananzan OSB ~ Sr. Maureen Catabian, RGS ~ Bro. Edmundo Fernandez, FSC ~ Sr. Teresa Mueda DC ~ Ma. Luz Mijares OSA ~ Fr. Jesus Maliit SSS ~ Sr. Elen Belardo RGS ~ Sr. Consuelo Varela LCM ~ Sr. Aurora Dulay LCM ~ Sr. Paz Suarez LCM ~ Sr. Sol Perpiñas RGS ~ Sr. Letty de los Santos, RSM ~Carlitos Siguion-Reyna ~ Ma. Lydia Orosa ~ Henri Khan ~ RC Constantino ~ Nathanael Santiago ~ Boy Morales ~ Linggoy Alcuaz ~ Oscar Orbos ~ Lito Anzures ~ Dulce Cepeda ~ Bebu Bulchand ~ Dinky Soliman ~ Mariaflor Querubin ~ Mila Santos ~ Dr. Joi Barrios-Leblanc ~ Prof. Judy Taguiwalo (All-UP Academic Employees Union) ~ Salve Odonio (QCPSTA) ~ Aurora Zambrano (Women & Gender Com) ~ Ma. Carmen Sison (DANFA) ~ Warlito Fanilag (UMA) ~ Wilson Baldonaza (KMU) ~ Connie Bragas-Regalado (Migrante International) ~ Antonio Tujan (IBON) ~ Amalia Salamat (One Phils) ~ Julie Po (Concerned Artists of the Phil) ~ Gloria Arellano (KADAMAY) ~ Leonardo Perez (ANGLO-KMU) ~ Reginaldo Vallejos (CenPEG) ~ Rading Ybañez (ALAYBAYAN Inc.) ~ Magdalena Manabat (Kapampangan Marangal Inc.) ~ Clarissa Velez (KMI) ~ Raymond Palatino (Kabataan Partylist) ~ Rafael Mariano (KMP) ~ Amie Dural (PCPR) ~ Kiama Kaara (Kendren) ~ Ariel Arceo (Bulacan board member) ~ Roman Polintan (BAYAN-CL) ~ Beverly Longid (Cordillera Peoples' Alliance) ~ Atty. Beverly Musni (Inpeace Mindanao) ~ Emmi De Jesus (Gabriela) ~ Christine Rosoni (SAMAKANA) ~ Myrna Buendia (Peoples' Clinic Foundation) ~ Jake Bachmann Clemencio, MIGRANTE Switzerland ~ Atty. Carlos Isagani Zarate (UPLM) ~ Atty. Frederico Gapuz (NUPL) ~ Dr. Ramon Palermo ~ Atty. Noel Neri (PLACE) ~ Atty. Neri Colmenares (CODAL) ~ Atty. Jobert Pahilga (SENTRA) Atty. Jose Molintas ~ Atty. Alfonso Cinco IV ~ Atty. Rachel Pastores ~ Atty. Randy Kinaud ~ Atty. Edre Olalia ~ Atty. Catherin Salucon ~ Atty. Ephraim Cortez ~ Atty. Corazon Fabros ~ Atty. Gregorio Fabros ~ Atty. Teofisto Melliza ~ Atty. Alberto Hidalgo (IBP, Leyte) ~ Atty. Marlon Manuel ~ Atty. Harry Roque ~ Atty. Louie Sison ~ Atty. Argee Guevarra (Sanlakas) ~ Manjetto Manalo (Laban ng Masa) ~ Nestor Puno (Ecumenical Learning Center for Children ~ Nagoya) ~ Dr. Gene Nisperos (HEAD) ~ Eleonor de Guzman (ANAKBAYAN) ~ Shan Andulwahid (UP Student Council) ~ Jose Cosido (CEGP) ~ Alvin Peters (NUSP) ~ Biyaya Quizon (SCMP) ~ Antonio Tinio (ACT) ~ Dr. Giovanni Tapang (AGHAM) ~ Atty. Joshua Alim (Arroyo Resign Movement, Panay) ~ Otoniel Gonzaga (VP, Phil. Councilor League -Iloilo) ~ Clemente Bautista Jr. (KALIKASAN) ~ Amirah Lidasan (MCPA) ~ Rev Claro Casambre (Philippine Peace Center)

Let your voice be heard, your head counted. Join us in a gathering for truth and justice at Liwasang Bonifacio on November 30, 2:00pm. Do what is right for your country! For more information contact 435-9151

RP-Spain convict swap treaty helps Larrañaga

From page A1

repatriation to that country of a Spanish-Filipino national convicted of the rape and murder of two sisters in Cebu.

By an overwhelming vote, the Senate on Monday night ratified the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons providing for the return home of the convicted citizens of each other's country.

The treaty's sponsor, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, has said ratification of the treaty would benefit convict Francisco "Paco" Larrañaga, who has been held at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City.

Larrañaga was found guilty in 2004 of the abduction, rape and murder of Marijoy and Jacqueline Chiong in Cebu City in 1997. Of dual citizenship, Larrañaga is the son of former Basque jai-alai player Manuel Larrañaga and a scion of the politically entrenched Osmeña family.

He was sentenced to death in 2004 but he was removed from death row when Ms Arroyo in 2006 commuted death sentences to life imprisonment and Congress abolished capital punishment later in the year.

Victims' ma condemns treaty

The mother of the two raped and slain women has condemned the signing of the treaty.

"That's crazy. I will oppose that," Thelma Chiong, mother of Marijoy and Jacqueline, said earlier this month on hearing that ratification of the treaty was afoot.

The Chiong sisters were abducted on the evening of July 16, 1997, while waiting for their father to pick them up at the Ayala Center Cebu.

The body of Marijoy, 20, was found two days later in a secluded ravine in the nearby town of Carcar. Jacqueline, 23, has never been found.

Larrañaga's death sentence had drawn appeals for clemency from visiting Spanish delegations, among them lawmakers and diplomats, as well as other European groups opposed to the death penalty.

Larrañaga had consistently proclaimed his innocence, saying he was in Quezon City attending a cooking class on the day of the crime.

'Celebrated beneficiary'

There are currently about 10 out of the 50,000 Filipinos in Spain who are in detention or house arrest or facing court cases ranging from homicide to drug trafficking to assault.

The treaty aims to bring back prisoners to their country of nationality to serve their sentences and enable them to be rehabilitated and integrated closer to their family and friends.

Senate Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan said the treaty was ratified with 17 affirmative votes and two abstentions—Senators Joker Arroyo and Jinggoy Estrada. Sen. Richard Gordon was absent while Sen. Antonio Trillanes has yet to be allowed to get out of jail and serve his term.

Santiago said the treaty would only cover prisoners with final convictions, which was why Larrañaga must wait for a final verdict on his appeal before availing himself of the prison transfer.

Santiago said the treaty should allow the 10 Filipinos languishing in Spanish jails to come back to the Philippines where they would be incarcerated closer to their families and friends.

"[Larrañaga] will be the most celebrated beneficiary of the treaty because he is a dual citizen," Santiago, head of the committee on foreign affairs, said in an interview after the public hearing on the treaty recently.

Spanish visit

Commenting on the Senate action, Senator Estrada said: "He (Larrañaga) committed the crime here, so he should serve his sentence here as well."

Malacañang said the treaty's ratification would benefit Filipino prisoners in Spanish jails.

Ambassador Marciano Paynor, who as chief presidential protocol is in charge of the overseas travels of the President, said Ms Arroyo could bring that good news to Filipinos in Spain when she officially visits that country from Dec. 2 to 5.

Paynor did not say if the Senate's ratification of the treaty, which was earlier ratified by the Spanish government, would highlight Ms Arroyo's state visit.

Ms Arroyo will have a bilateral meeting with Spanish President Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero during her visit.

King and Queen

Since she was officially invited by Spain, Ms Arroyo will also have an audience with the Spanish monarchs—King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia.

"Actually, she will not be having a full (expanded) bilateral meeting with Spanish officials," Paynor said when asked if the treaty would be extensively tackled.

"It will be probably discussed but not in the usual manner," he said, pointing out that usually, the bilateral meeting starts with heads of governments then proceeds to an expanded bilateral meeting with top ministers of both countries.

As regards Larrañaga, Paynor said the convict could ask to be transferred to a Spanish jail following the ratification of the treaty.

Not automatic

But he said "it's not automatic" and that "there is a process" to be followed.

Paynor said that under the treaty, which calls for reciprocity on both countries, "not at all cases (can be covered)."

Santiago said recently that the family of the Cebu rape victims might oppose the transfer of Larrañaga because "they may want (him) to serve his sentence here or the public will feel that the victim's family will be disadvantaged if he is imprisoned in Spain."

Santiago said the country also had transfer treaties with Hong Kong and Thailand and she hoped similar accords would be reached with other countries, especially in the Middle East, in view of the millions of Filipinos working overseas.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, the Public Attorney's Office, the Bureau of Corrections and the Department of Justice have endorsed the treaty.

Judge commits suicide

Larrañaga, Josman Aznar, Rowen Adlawan, Alberto Cano, Ariel Balansag and brothers James Andrew and James Anthony Uy drew two life sentences each in May 1999 for the rape-murder of the sisters.

In a twist in the case, Judge Martin Ocampo, who had tried and convicted the seven youths, was found dead in a hotel room in Cebu in October 1999. Authorities later ruled his death a suicide.

In February 2004, the Supreme Court upgraded the punishment of Larrañaga et al., except for one of the group, to death by lethal injection.

The life sentence on James Anthony Uy, who was a minor at the time of the crime, was retained.

Miriam suspects ...

From page A1

cochair Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Santiago had previously questioned Finance Secretary Margarito Teves for approving the sale of the majority interest in Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) "behind the backs" of the JCPC.

Teves has been summoned to Congress on Dec. 13 to explain the sale of the government's majority stake in PNOC-EDC to the Lopez-owned First Gen with its offer of $1.35 billion to help meet the 2007 budget deficit target of P63 billion.

Yesterday, Santiago reported that she had blocked the move by PNOC-EDC president Paul Aquino to secure the congressional power commission's green light for the finalization of a geothermal resources sales contract for Palinpinon 1 and 2, and for Tongonan 1.

Reached last night, Aquino declined to comment.

Santiago claimed that Aquino tried to coax her cochair, Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, and the JCPC House panel members to approve the project before Dec. 5 when the geothermal fields would be up for bidding.

Currency fluctuations

Santiago objected because the contract prices were pegged in US dollars and not in the local currency which would open these deals to foreign exchange fluctuations, the bane of previous power agreements.

"This is the very reason why electricity in the Philippines is one of the highest in the world. Under the contracts, the consumers will again be hit by so-called automatic adjustment mechanisms, which will raise the price of electricity," Santiago said.

She said that PNOC-EDC sale had become "suspicious for its longing for fast-break approvals" considering the performance incentives for PNOC-EDC's top brass in the contract provisions.

"The performance incentives that PNOC-EDC is giving to itself will of course increase the price of electricity," Santiago said.

Contract pricing

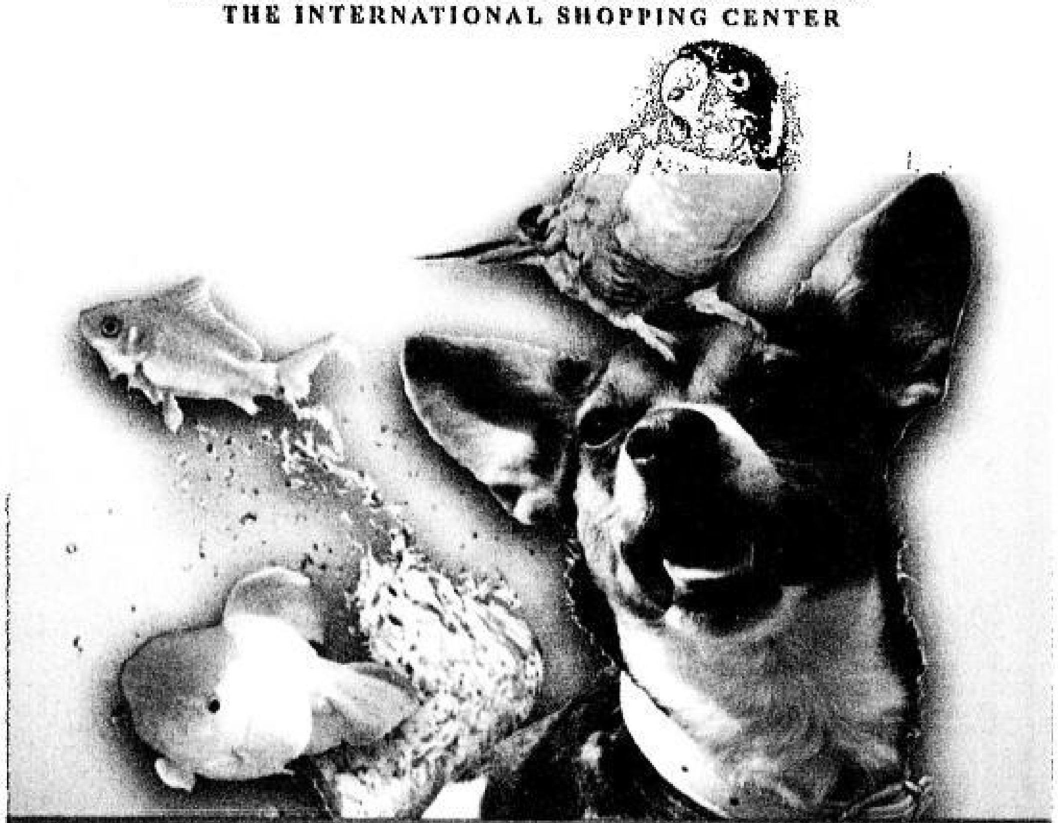
She also questioned why PNOC-EDC would base the contract pricing of the geothermal plants on coal prices.

"This indexing has no rational basis and would again give windfall profits to PNOC-EDC, at the expense of the consumers," the senator said.

One public hearing

Santiago said these multibillion-peso deals should not be rushed considering their broad impact on the national interest.

"One public hearing, without prior study by the new composition of the JCPC, will not redound to the national interest. The Epira mandate to privatize does not preclude full study of the implications and consequences of each contract proposed by PNOC-EDC," Santiago said.



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‘Pays to be safe’ in Lebanon

FILIPINOS IN LEBANON HAVE BEEN ADvised to stay indoors owing to the political situation in the country where the recent resignation of President Emile Lahoud resulted in a leadership vacuum.

Joseph Assad, honorary consul of Lebanon to the Philippines, said the 25,000 Filipinos—mostly domestic helpers—working in the Middle East country should take necessary precautions just like everyone else.

"The Filipinos working in Lebanon should try to avoid public places and just stay at home or at the embassy," Assad said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

"We are waiting until Nov. 30 when the parliament is scheduled to elect a new president," he added.

Lahoud left office at the end of his term on Nov. 22 after the Lebanese parliament failed to elect his successor amid the continuing deadlock between the Western-backed government and the Syrian- and Iranian-backed opposition.

Assad said Filipino domestic helpers on their days off should avoid going to the movies or strolling in open areas.

"It is safe and calm in Lebanon right now, but it still pays to be safe," he said.

Abdul Kader Ali Jadid, president of the Filipino-Lebanese Friendship Community, looked on the bright side.

"We are sure this situation will come to pass without resulting in war or strife," he said.

Jadid said 75 percent of the Filipinos in Lebanon work in Christian areas like Beirut and the northern part of the country.

Recruitment consultant Emmanuel Geslani said 7,000 Filipinos were brought back to the Philippines at the height of the Israel-Lebanon war last year. Of this number, 3,000 had since returned to Lebanon through "back-door" countries like Syria and Jordan, he said. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Screening and Selection Committee formed by the President announces that it has extended the period for submission of applications and nominations for the position of **Chairman, Commission on Elections (COMELEC) until 6 December 2007**.

The Screening and Selection Committee is composed of the following persons:

Chairman
  Sec. Bernardino Abes
Members:
  Mr. Jose Concepcion Jr
  Ms. Carmen Pedrosa
  Mr. Vicente R. Jayme
  Mr. Democrito Menoza

The Chairman must be a natural-born citizen of the Philippines, at least thirty-five years of age, a holder of college degree, a member of the Philippine Bar who has been in the practice of law for at least ten years, must not have been a candidate for any elective position in the immediately preceding elections. (Section 1, Article IX-C, Constitution):

Applications and nominations, preferably with the curriculum vitae/ resumes of the applicant or nominee may be submitted to the undersigned, 10th Floor, Presidential Management Staff Building, Arlegui St., Manila.

Manila, 27 November 2007.

ENRIQUE D. PEREZ
Secretary to the
Screening and Selection Committee

This is Public Service Announcement of Philippine Daily Inquirer

Court drops Marcos-era graft case

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS DROPPED THE graft case against the former chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines in connection with a P207.1-million loan the government bank granted to a food company owned by cronies of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos more than 20 years ago.

Associate Justice Teresita Diaz-Baldos said the court granted ex-DBP chair Rafael Sison's motion to dismiss the case because government lawyers had failed to challenge the case when it was first taken up with the Ombudsman in 1992, and later with the Supreme Court.

The antigraft court's Fifth Division noted that the Supreme Court, for the same reason, had junked two other cases involving the same loan transaction to PhilAsia Food Industries Corp., reportedly owned by Roberto Sabido and the late Roberto Benedicto, a law classmate of Marcos and a known crony. Other private respondents were identified as Antonio Tan, Miguel Gonzales and Federico Ballon.

Nine years after the high court decision, however, government lawyers moved to revive the complaint against Sison and DBP board members Jose de Ocampo, Jose Tengco, Regio Garcia and bank director Dino Crucillo for allegedly giving PhilAsia undue advantage by granting it a loan totaling P207,159,448.42 despite the lack of adequate collateral.

In an earlier case, Tengco and Crucillo had challenged the revival of the case on the principle of *res judicata*, which forbids the reopening of the matter once it has been judicially determined by competent authority.

Court records showed that in July 1992, former Ombudsman Conrado Vasquez dismissed the graft complaint and this was upheld by the high court with finality, since the "proper authorities" did not challenge the decision.

The Supreme Court gave merit to their motion and ruled five months ago that *res judicata* applied in the case.

The high court also made permanent a temporary restraining order on further hearings of the graft case by the antigraft court, the Ombudsman and the PCGG.

AFP not spying on press –Esperon

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said yesterday the military had no intention of "spying" on the members of the media as contended by journalists who covered the court-martial hearing two weeks ago of Marine and Army Scout Ranger officers implicated in the failed February 2006 coup attempt.

"I did not get your report but I heard about some alleged snooping. But I don't think that that would be our intention. I don't think that's our intention," Esperon told reporters at Camp Aguinaldo.

Esperon said he was not aware what kind of spying the journalists were referring to in their stories on the Nov. 16 hearing of the 28 accused soldiers led by Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin at Camp Capinpin.

Neither was there any intention to be inconspicuous, as the journalists alleged of the military intelligence agents that they said were lurking around the courtroom at the Camp Capinpin Army camp in Tanay, Rizal, he said.

"We were openly there," Esperon said.

"They were just there to see what was happening and keep the situation under control," he said, explaining why the soldiers, who were in civilian clothes, were mingling with the media.

Esperon said it was not the military's policy to place journalists under surveillance, pointing out that there was no need to spy on the media.

Esperon said he would look into the journalists' allegations that the men they believed were posing as reporters were intelligence agents.

The journalists who covered the Tanay hearing told Esperon the men displayed the same orange stickers given to the media at the camp entrance, took down notes during the hearing, stayed with the reporters in the area reserved for the media, and peeked at the journalists' notebooks. *Nikko Dizon*

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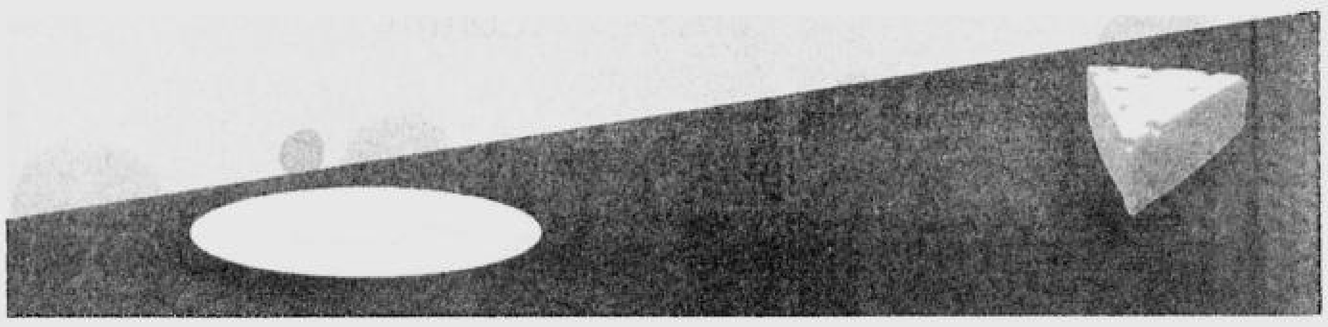

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Stasis

EDITORIAL

THE PRESIDENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' Conference of the Philippines, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo of Jaro, has called for a "moral revolution" in the face of social ills besetting the nation. "If only to stop our country from continuing to become a 'social volcano,' we support the idea of a moral revolution," he said. The statement was made amid what Lagdameo called the unremitting piling up of "social concerns and nagging issues that are crying for solution and closure."

Lagdameo said a moral revolution is needed to ease the socio-political turmoil and pave the way for genuine national reconciliation. "[It's] nothing new," he said, "but the resolve may be."

Perhaps that's the problem. The call for moral revolution has so often been made by Lagdameo and his brothers in the CBCP that it has become a tired refrain, spectacular in its pulpit-fire-and-brimstone, but signifying nothing. The bishops often make calls for moral change when they have nothing new to say or they have been boxed into stasis by their own moral confusion and uncertainty. Moral revolution has become a euphemism for lack of moral will, which presupposes a lack of moral vision.

Lagdameo perhaps betrayed this lack of moral vision when, along with his call for moral conversion, he also urged government officials "to do a Zacchaeus" and give their ill-gotten possessions to the poor. While the call is Gospel-inspired, it is not morally wise; it sounds like a sly condonation of plunder. It seems to tell plunderers that it's all right to steal from the public coffers and amass ill-gotten wealth so long as they give part of it later to the poor. Any rogue or thief might romanticize his plunder by doing a Robin Hood—or a Zacchaeus.

But to be fair to the CBCP president, he has also criticized the presidential pardon extended to Joseph Estrada, a convicted plunderer. "But where is restorative justice?" he asked. "Where is the justice capable of restoring harmony in social relations disrupted by the criminal act committed?"

But then his brother-bishops sang a different tune. Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Vidal welcomed the pardon. So did Nueva Vizcaya Bishop Ramon Villena and former Novaliches Bishop Teodoro Bacani. While all three cited the Church's teaching on mercy with justice, they glossed over the fact that Estrada did not even acknowledge his sin, much less seek forgiveness.

The striking clash of views betrays either the political expedience or moral bankruptcy of the bishops. Either way, it encapsulates what Pope Benedict XVI in another context has called the "dictatorship of relativism" that characterizes the globalizing world. More importantly, it shows the inability of bishops to provide moral guidance to a nation that is in a terrible moral muddle.

Part of the reason the bishops add to the moral confusion of the nation is that just about every one of them seems to have jettisoned the cardinal virtue of prudence and acquired a taste for loquaciousness, offering his opinion on just about every issue under the sun. Gone are the days when bishops would convoke a council and labor over a document or a position behind which they would stand solidly, their erudition and unity a fortress of moral conviction and power. Since the death of Jaime Cardinal Sin, the bishops have gone about their merry ways of individualism and division, leaking developments to the press in a shadow game of brinkmanship and one-upmanship, or casually shooting off their mouths before the media. Perhaps they are only being human; in their divisions, they actually constitute the Philippine Church, or what's left of it, which in turn embodies the ugly divisions of the whole nation.

But the bishops cannot afford to be human in this manner. First, because as successors to the apostles, they have the prophetic mission to read the signs of the times and provide spiritual direction to the people. Second, as the teaching authorities of the Church, they are expected to draw from the Gospel and the social and moral teachings of the Church to provide moral direction to the people. And third, because the Philippine Church, through the bishops, remains the linchpin of the nation, holding it together. If the nation is in a moral drift, it is in a large way because of the Church. If the social volcano explodes, it is because the Church has come unhinged.

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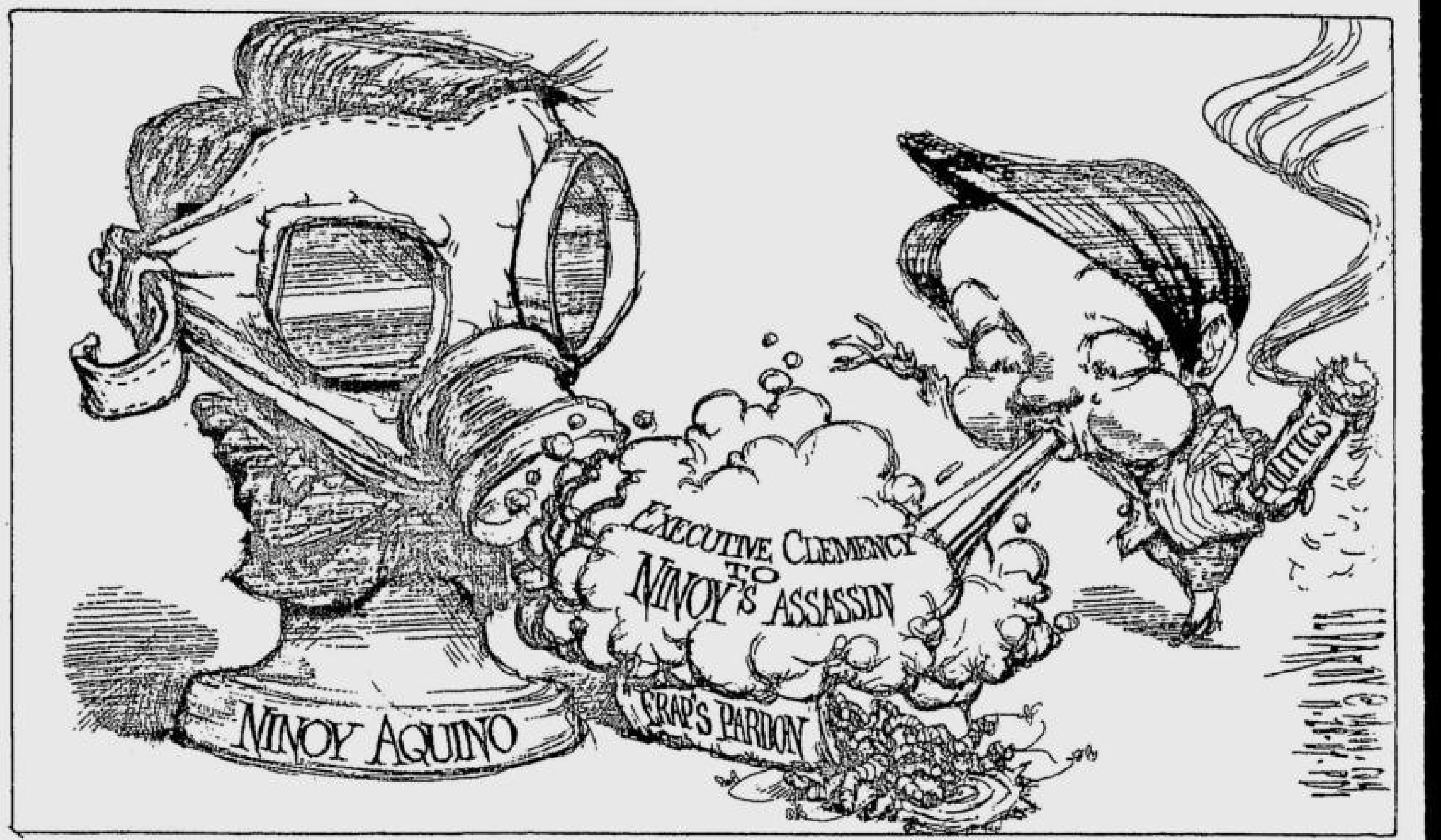
NINOY AQUINO
EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY TO NINOY'S ASSASSIN
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POLITICS

Unlike most politicians, Escudero talks sense

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

MOST JOURNALISTS HAVE INTERVIEWED politicians of every persuasion, color, stripe, shape and size and the most common is the *bolero*, the type who flatters and tries to fool the journalist with his glib tongue. A prominent politician is called "Joe de Bola" by journalists because of this bad habit. Another type is one who knows very little of a given subject but tries to bluff his way through with generalizations and evasions. But journalists were not born yesterday and they know right away when a politician is bluffing or making *bola*.

That is why it is such a joy to interview Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero. He is not only frank and honest, he is also very articulate and very knowledgeable on any given subject. Unlike most politicians, he does his homework. Ask him any question and he can answer you with plenty of information. One session with him is enough to give you material for several columns.

Escudero was the lone guest at last Monday's Kapihan sa Manila. I interviewed him at the forum at the lobby lounge of the Manila Hotel and, before and after it, in a private room. We talked about so many things, both on- and off-the-record, that I can write about only a few of them, those that he gave me the permission to put on the record.

It seemed to me that here is one senator who is really studying the nation's problems and trying to find solutions to them. For example, the biggest problem is corruption, especially in some agencies notorious for that, such as the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs.

He recognizes that there are some old-timers who are beyond redemption and who would be better removed from these bureaus. At the same time, he recognizes that it may be unfair and perhaps illegal to fire them without due process, and that it would be difficult and time consuming to gather evidence against them.

But he has a solution to the problem, and it is so simple I wonder why nobody else thought of it before. The answer is simply to remove from them the opportunity to commit graft.

How do you do that? By transferring them to another office, without diminution in their pay or rank. An employee of the BOC, can be transferred to say, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, in a division or section where he cannot do any hanky-panky. You do not violate his rights, but at the same time you remove any temptation and opportunity for graft.

On labor, Escudero said we have no policy except to export our workers and collect the dollars they send home. But there is no rhyme or reason for it. For example, there is now a demand for our nurses abroad. So we churn them out like sardines from nursing schools, some of which are diploma mills. When the time comes when the market abroad for nurses is saturated, he said, we would be left with thousands of nurses with diplomas but no jobs. His proposal is to match our production of workers to the forthcoming demand overseas.

For example, we should know ahead of time through our attachés that this or that Middle East country would embark on a construction binge several years from now. So we should already start training future workers in the construction industry. By the time their training is completed, the demand would be starting and they would be there, ready to fill the demand. It is something similar to the current practice of delivering materials "just in time" when the users need them. That way, there is no need to stockpile them and expenses for storage are reduced and losses due to oversupply and spoilage are avoided.

Escudero also said he thinks all presidential candidates in the past, except Ferdinand Marcos, had no program of government, only motherhood statements. Why? Because some of them had doubts of winning. Because others had no time to study and formulate any concrete and detailed program of government. And because still others really did not know what to do.

What happened was that after they became president, they just did some troubleshooting on the problems as they cropped up. Some just lurched from crisis to crisis, trying to patch things up, like what is happening now to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In 2010, he said, the voters should demand from each candidate a concrete program of government. And vote only for the candidate with a workable plan.

* * *

Several columns ago, I wrote about dog-fighting, which is prohibited by the Animal Welfare Act, and about a raid by the police in Antipolo where a number of individuals, including foreigners, were caught. They were charged and are now on trial, although the foreigners were able to leave the country. The column reported on the first day of the trial and how the fighting dogs, pit bulls, rescued during the raid were being rehabilitated by the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) in its Animal Rescue Center in Loyola Heights. In the course of the column, I also warned about taking pit bulls as pets.

That warning elicited a number of reactions from pit bull lovers who protested that pit bulls are not dangerous if they are treated properly by their owners. "There are no bad pit bulls, only bad owners," was the common refrain. They said my warning was an injustice to pit bulls as it created prejudice against them.

I realize this is true, for which reason I apologize to the misunderstood pit bulls, but not to the owners who use them for dog-fighting.

That done, I will sign off with this advice: Love your pets, be they pit bulls or aspins or any other dog breed, or cats or birds or rabbits. Treat them with love and kindness and they will return your love a thousand fold. I know. Ours do.

Hero

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE WAS NO MORE INFURIATING SIGHT than the one the newspapers carried last Nov. 1 of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo visiting Libingan ng mga Bayani on All Saints' Day. It added whole new meanings to the phrase, "Day of the Dead," which is how All Saints' Day is better known. It wasn't just a day for recollecting those that had gone before, it was a day for marking the things that have died in the country, chief of them heroism.

It cheapened the concept. At the very least, I couldn't understand what GMA was doing in a place that echoed with the word "hero." Heroism was the last thing she showed when she came to power in 2001. At the very most, I couldn't understand why the Libingan should be the natural resting place of presidents. Why should president and hero be interchangeable? In this country, president is largely interchangeable only with heel, even when the president became so by actually being voted into office.

I know this country violently protested the idea of Ferdinand Marcos being buried in Libingan ng mga Bayani, which Erap proposed at the beginning of his term. But even that protest, uplifting as it was, was flawed. The point is not merely that presidents may not be buried in ground reserved for the great when they've proven themselves to be absolute scoundrels; the point is to not bury presidents in ground reserved for the great unless they've proven themselves great. The burden of proof lies on the about-to-be-buried to show they are heroes; it does not lie on the nation to show they are not.

No wonder Libingan ng mga Bayani is teeming with rogues. Enough to make Andres Bonifacio and Jose Rizal turn in their graves.

That brings me to Bonifacio, whose day it is on Friday, and which occasion sparked the perorations above. Bonifacio's day has had a curious history. It was originally Bonifacio Day but later became National Heroes Day. The conversion met with bitter protest from nationalists, who felt that the Great Plebeian had been shortchanged, the day exclusively reserved for him made generic to include all other heroes. As greatness went, they argued, he wasn't any less than Rizal, his accomplishments being nothing short of astonishing. The argument bore fruit, and Nov. 30 was given back to Bonifacio, with National Heroes Day reassigned to the last Sunday of August when the Katipunan rose up against Spanish rule.

Heroism being cheapened by the day, I don't know why we shouldn't hark back to Bonifacio himself to see its real worth. Among the heroes, he's the one who has something special to say to us today.

Not least is what you keep hearing on Solar Sports, the one concept Spud Webb articulated in this wise: "Never tell me what I can or cannot do." Webb did the miraculous by winning the NBA All-Star Dunk Contest while standing 5'6". Bonifacio did the even more miraculous by mounting the first revolution against colonial rule in Asia while being, as his title says, a plebeian.

Of course, how wretched Bonifacio's personal circumstances were, whether he was truly proletarian or not, has been debated at length. But one thing is fairly sure: He wasn't rich. He was neither principalia nor ilustrado, neither one of the indios given petty power by the Spaniards, like Aguinaldo, nor one of those who had managed to study in a university or abroad, like Rizal. He was one of the teeming horde of urban folk who eked out a living the hard way.

Yet at the end of the day, it was he and not they who founded the Katipunan, and it was the Katipunan and not any of the movements launched by the Propaganda Period that seriously challenged Spanish rule. None of this is to say that the Katipunan alone would have done the trick—Bonifacio himself looked to Rizal as the father of the Filipino Revolt and to his ideas as its animating force. But that the Katipunan itself came into being by the labors of a "nobody" like Bonifacio—that would work against him later in his struggle to retain leadership of it—is breathtaking.

If you look at the inert social structure during Bonifacio's time, not unlike the caste system where social mobility is next to nothing, the lowest rungs being repositories of contempt and abuse, what Bonifacio did has "Hero" written all over it. All the other anti-colonial struggles in Asia, which came later, were inspired, founded, and led by the *burgis*.

Given today's concept of hero as being synonymous with power, or worse anyone Malacañang pleases to send to the local version of Valhalla, it's good to have Bonifacio remind us that he was poor but he was not powerless, he was down but was not out, he was unheralded but he was not mediocre. Indeed, given today's role of the poor, which is either as passive recipients of gratuity or benevolence or as a nameless horde to cajole and lead in spasmodic displays of national heroism, also called "People Power," to be blamed when it does not happen and forgotten when it does happen (GMA preferred to thank Angelo Reyes first for Edsa II!), it's good to have Bonifacio remind us that the poor are not just perfectly capable of taking care of themselves, they are perfectly capable of leading themselves—and others—out of the rut they're in.

In fact, the only surprising thing is that we can't see that. Our own religion tells us that the Savior was not a Pharisee or merchant or demagogue, he was a lowly carpenter who walked in the company of even lowlier fishermen. Our own history tells us that the Leader was not a creole or mestizo, he was an indio who sold fans and walking sticks on sidewalks and walked in the company of urban or *poblacion* poor who were similarly occupied.

Heroism doesn't really work in mysterious ways, we're just too busy being blind to see it.

Horror scene in Bali

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

A WEEK FROM NOW, WORLD LEADERS WILL BE challenged to take decisive steps to avert the worst scenarios of global warming at the climate change summit in Bali, Indonesia. In the prelude to the summit, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon shocked the world with the warning that planet Earth faces a more terrifying disaster than any science fiction movie because it is real.

The warning followed the release on Nov. 17 in Valencia, Spain, of the Fourth Assessment Report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The report painted an apocalyptic scenario more grim than its previous reports. The fourth assessment synthesized three previous reports by more than 100 leading climate scientists during the past 12 months.

In the summit, the contribution of Asian countries, including the Philippines, to greenhouse emissions that raise global warming will be highlighted. The depletion of Philippine forests as a significant cause of greenhouse effect will come into focus.

A report by a coalition of environment groups, titled "Up in Smoke? Asia and the Pacific," says Asia is "effectively on the front line of climate change," as it is home to almost two-thirds of the world's population. With half of this population living near the coast, billions are directly vulnerable to a rise in sea levels driven by a warming world. Asia is where the "human drama of climate change" will be largely played out. The report, by the New Economics Foundation, represents the perspective of a coalition of 21 members, including Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Oxfam, ActionAid International, and the Working Group on Climate Change and Development. Calling on richer countries to commit to make mandatory cuts in greenhouse gases, the report says climate change "will undo" decades of "painfully won" social and economic progress across Asia, through increasingly frequent and extreme weather events.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, in its summit in Singapore last week, gave notice that it will refocus its priority to the Bali summit. The Asean leaders agreed to increase the forest cover of the region, which is in danger of further depletion. They agreed to promote the use of clean energy sources and to protect marine ecosystems. Environmental groups have criticized Asean for being long on rhetoric and short on action.

The Bali conference from Dec. 3 to 14 will start negotiations on a replacement for the Kyoto Protocol, which requires 35 industrial nations to reduce greenhouse emissions by an average 5 percent below 1990 levels by 2012, when the accord expires.

Rajendra Pachauri, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said that what may happen in Bali is a likely agreement "on the roadmap for the future." The United States and Australia, among the industrial countries, are not a party to the Kyoto Protocol. The United States is the world's leading carbon emitter, followed by India and China. The latter two developing countries are afraid that they would be called upon to reduce emissions after 2012, which would hurt their economic growth and poverty-eradication programs.

In Bali, the United States will stand alone among industrial countries because new Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has pledged to ratify the Kyoto Protocol following Australia's parliamentary elections last Saturday.

The United States, China and India will come under pressure in Bali, following the Fourth Assessment Report of the UN IPCC and the campaign by Ban challenging governments to act on the findings of the report.

In launching the report in Valencia, Spain, Ban said climate change is "unequivocal" and may bring "abrupt and irreversible" impacts. "Today, the world's scientists have spoken clearly and with one voice." he said. "In Bali, I expect the world's policymakers to do the same."

"I come to you humbled after seeing some of the most precious treasures of our planet threatened by humanity's own hand," Ban said. The effects of climate change are "so severe and so sweeping that only urgent global action will do. We are all in this together. We must work together."

Key points from the IPCC report include:

- Retreating glaciers and loss of Alpine snow, thinning Arctic summer sea ice and thawing permafrost show that climate change is already on the march.
- By 2100, global average surface temperatures could rise by between 1.1C and 6.4C, compared with 1980-99 levels. Sea levels will rise by at least 18 cm.
- Heat waves, rain storms, tropical cyclones and surges in sea level are among the events expected to become more frequent, more widespread or more intense this century.
- All countries will be affected by climate change, but those in the forefront are poor nations, especially small island-states, and developing economies where millions of people live in low-lying deltas.
- In Africa, by 2020, up to 250 million people will be exposed to increased water stress and, in some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50 percent.
- By 2050, the availability of fresh water in Central, South, East and Southeast Asia—particularly in large river basins—is projected to decrease, while in coastal areas there will be greater risk of flooding.
- If unchecked, global warming will spread hunger and disease, put further stress on water resources, cause fiercer storms and more frequent droughts, and drive up to 70 percent of plant and animal species to extinction.

The report points out that protecting and replanting forests are the most efficient way to fight global warning. But the Food and Agriculture Organization says that forests are being lost at "an alarming rate," lately helped by the craze for biofuels.

Blue babies and 'Ed TV'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHAT'S A BLUE BABY? THE FIRST TIME I HEARD the term was from family stories about how my eldest sister Neneng was said to have been born a "blue baby," allegedly because of some blood disorder that impaired oxygenation, turning her "blue." A timely blood transfusion from my father saved her life, but I wonder what would save other "blue babies" who are getting sick because of another reason.

In the Philippines, we are seeing infants with "blue baby syndrome" or methemoglobinemia, which the environment group Greenpeace says is "a fatal disease which occurs in infants who ingest nitrates-polluted water associated with excessive fertilizer use."

To "highlight the urgency of protecting the country's dwindling clean water resources from continuing toxic pollution," Greenpeace activists yesterday deposited 30 "blue babies" at the doorsteps of the DENR. Not to worry, the "babies" were only dolls painted blue.

But there's no trivializing the dangers posed by dirty water. Last week, Greenpeace revealed that nitrates from excessive fertilizer use have contaminated groundwater used for drinking in major agricultural areas in Benguet and Bulacan. Aside from blue baby syndrome, nitrates-laden water also presents serious health implications, including various types of cancer.

* * *

AS PART of the activity, Greenpeace asked the office of Environment Secretary Lito Atienza to receive a blue baby doll wearing a bib with the words "Clean water for me" as a visual reminder of the grave impacts of polluted water on human health. The "blue baby" was accompanied by a letter asking the government agency to disclose what steps it has so far taken to ensure that the country's freshwater supply is free of toxic pollutants.

"Pollution of freshwater resources is completely unacceptable and must never be a 'reality' that people have to endure. People should not have to live with harmful substances in their water supply. The government must protect and ensure access and right to clean water," said Greenpeace campaigner Daniel Ocampo.

* * *

I DIDN'T make it to the tour, even if visiting Lake Sebu has been a lifelong dream. But the invitation of the Knowledge Channel, or rather, the reason for it, earlier this month still deserves mention in this space.

With the USAID, the Knowledge Channel Foundation Inc. turned over educational television (ETV) facilities to the San Isidro Elementary School in Midsayap, North Cotabato, some weeks ago.

At official ceremonies attended by Education Secretary Jesli Lapus and USAID mission director Jon Lindborg, the school received satellite TV infrastructure under the program "Television Education for the Advancement of Muslim Mindanao" or TEAM-Mindanao.

The three-year USAID-assisted project has provided 150 public schools in conflict-affected areas in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and Regions 9 and 12 with access to ETV programs covering the DepEd's basic learning competencies in Math, Science and English.

San Isidro Elementary School is the 150th and last school on the list of recipients, officially terminating the Knowledge Channel project in this part of the country. So far, the Knowledge Channel has been benefiting some 78,529 students on a yearly basis in the most remote and isolated areas of Mindanao. It has been made available in 31 municipalities within eight provinces, including Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Indeed, the Knowledge Channel has even reached the southernmost municipality in the country, Sitangkai in Tawi-tawi, where schools were electrified with solar panels before the ETC infrastructure was installed.

Doris Nuval, TEAM-Mindanao project director, says that with this program, "Tawi-Tawi children as well as their teachers … now enjoy and learn from educational television like their Manila counterparts, in effect equalizing teaching and learning opportunities."

* * *

NUVAL notes that the project's impact can be measured in the improved academic performance of students in the recipient schools. All 15 schools provided with KCh in Zamboanga Sibugay, for instance, have posted significant increases across all subject areas in the Division Achievement Tests (DAT). While in the Habib Moin Anduhol Elementary School, students posted a significant increase in its Mean Percentage Score (MPS) from 25th place (43.03 percent) in the division last year to 7th place (61.34 percent) this school year. Bangkerohan Elementary School also showed an increase in its MPS and rose from 27th place (50.35 percent) last year to first place (68 percent) this year in the DAT.

Nuval also claimed that TEAM-Mindanao is a prototype of project sustainability with Parent-Teachers and Community Associations of 16 schools in North Cotabato, Maguindanao, Zamboanga Sibugay and Tawi-Tawi having raised funds on their own to buy a total of 45 additional television sets for their schools. This, said Nuval, is "no mean feat, considering that all of these communities are mired in poverty and belong to 5th and 6th class municipalities."

Some local government units have also embraced TEAM-Mindanao and have supported the project by paying their schools' electric bills, improving KCh viewing rooms by repainting or decorating these, providing floor mats for children to sit on, and most important, maintaining and ensuring the safety of the ETV infrastructure with the help of barangay tanods.

In fact, in all the brouhaha surrounding the ZTE broadband project, one part of which was the provision of educational TV shows to public schools in remote areas of the country, I wondered why the government would want to spend billions on a project that an NGO—Knowledge Channel—has already been carrying out so successfully. Well, as they say, ask a stupid question…

CAPS

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE OF THE GOOD THINGS ABOUT PRESENTING papers at academic conferences and giving lectures is that it forces me to sit down and commit stray thoughts to paper. Either I rush to a favorite library for fresh research or browse memory and take notes for the topic at hand.

The Ortigas Library and the Lopez Library gave me the pleasure of sharing my thoughts on research as a means to mounting simple exhibitions on Philippine history and culture. I expected the usual suspects, people involved in museums or libraries, and at most 20 participants, only to be surprised by a crowd of over a hundred.

How could one cover a topic like "research methods" in 40 minutes when it normally takes a whole semester in graduate school? So I recommended: "The Art of Literary Research" by Richard Altick and "The Modern Researcher" by Barzun and Graff. These two works are so enjoyable, unlike the traumatic experience with Kate Turabian in college.

Research is often seen as a chore, but I was fortunate to have had the late Doreen G. Fernandez as my freshman English teacher and it was a (in)formative experience. It was Doreen who introduced the term paper class by declaring, "I shall introduce you to the joy of research." Nobody believed her and, despite our love for her as a teacher and a person, the class could not suppress an audible groan at this remark. Research a joy? You must be kidding. Little did I know that this was the class that would be the foundation of my career.

I was not the typical college nerd in glasses, but I was strange because I actually enjoyed going to the Rizal Library of the Ateneo de Manila University, and not just to enjoy the air-conditioned comfort most conducive to sleeping and furtive eating in those now extinct research rooms. These special rooms, which were available on request, were phased out later because, I think, the privacy encouraged young people with raging hormones to do more than eat and sleep there.

Doreen taught us about libraries and archives, encouraged us to visit museums, and showed us how to conduct proper interviews. She showed us how to take down notes on 3 x 5 cards, how to make citations in correct academic and bibliographic form, and how to type out a footnote—all in the age of the manual typewriter.

Young people today cannot imagine how lucky they are, with word-processing programs. The technology has advanced, the paper is easier to print, but the research process remains very much the same: You go to a library basically for printed material, to an archive for manuscripts, to a museum for artifacts. Modern libraries though have almost everything these days including Internet connection, computerized indexes and catalogues, periodicals and other materials in microfilm or CD format.

I would like to think that anybody doing research for any purpose must have the following (which spell out CAPS): Curiosity, Attention to detail, Perseverance, and the ability to Synthesize and analyze the material gathered. Without curiosity, there is no driving force. Without attention to detail, a project falls flat. Without perseverance, one will not plod on till he finds what has to be found. And without the ability to synthesize and analyze all the loose strands, information remains without form or utility.

My first research paper was on Nora Aunor. I was the only one in the university who asked for the movie magazines in the library, and the normally stern librarian, who was probably a Noranian, was extra helpful. She actually smiled as she handed me yet another bound volume of Liwayway or Kislap. She even gave me a knowing wink as if I were furtively browsing porn. I wasn't interested in Nora Aunor's movie career, rather I wanted to see what she meant to her fans.

In the course of my research, I found out about a rather scary blond, blue-eyed, fair-skinned walking doll that Tirso Cruz gave Aunor. Christened Maria Leonora Theresa, fans fantasized that this was the love child of the "Guy en Pip" love team. The doll had its own float at movie parades, it starred in a film that had her name as a title, and it was kept like a *santo* in a glass case in Aunor's home and was venerated on certain days of the week. She was showered with fan mail, clothes, money and jewelry. Now, that was obscure but interesting research.

In my sophomore year, Doreen found me a summer job as research assistant to a Ph.D. student in ethnomusicology doing a dissertation on the "Pasyon." It wasn't my area of interest but the 10 days I spent in the field, including taping an entire Pasyon in Angeles, Pampanga, that went on for over three days and nights, was a life-changing experience. High points of this research was experiencing the Pasyon with brass band, and another with an electric guitar-and-drum combo. In one town, two groups competed for the most tunes, leading to some odd combinations. For example, the narrative had Christ being whipped and a crown of thorns thrust on his head, all this sung to the tune of "Do-re-mi" from "The Sound of Music." When Christ ascended into heaven, it was narrated to the tune of the national anthem. When the Virgin Mary ascended body and soul into heaven, it was sung to the tune of "Anchors Aweigh" or "Roll Out the Barrel"!

Research is a frame of mind, a process that calls to mind the biblical advice, "Seek and you shall find."

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

A matter of justice

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

"FAMILY PLANNING? REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH? DOESN'T that distract us from more urgent issues of poverty and inequity?"

I hear that question quite often from both political conservatives as well as progressives. And when the issue is related to adolescents and young people, people will say: "What we need are more schools, more jobs."

I have no quarrel with such arguments, but often, too, I think there's an element of myopia in thinking that young people don't need programs around reproductive and sexual health. In fact, I'd propose that tackling problems around young people's reproductive and sexual health is itself a matter of social justice.

Let's start with the health situation of young people. Especially in Third World settings, these are survivors, people who have hurdled the many challenges of early childhood, particularly malnutrition and infectious diseases.

We don't often think of teenagers as vulnerable to health problems, but they are, except that the pattern of risks now changes. With males, the main risks cluster around mental health, substance abuse (which relates ultimately to mental health), accidents and sexually transmitted infections. For females, the risks are even more very clearly related to reproductive and sexual health. The problems emerge even among those who are not yet sexually active. The onset of menstruation brings problems like iron-deficiency anemia, especially among young girls who are already disadvantaged by poverty and gender discrimination. Menstruation also means fluctuations in hormones which, accompanied by other anatomical changes, result in endogenous infections of the reproductive tract.

For those who become sexually active, the risks now include sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS. In the Philippines, the highest number of reported HIV infections are found in females aged 15 to 24. (In contrast, among males, the infection rates are highest in older men.) People deny these risks because they think it applies only to sex workers and to the "promiscuous," but the reality is that many infections will take place among young girls forced into marriage because of a premarital pregnancy. Because they're married, they downplay their risks for these STIs even if their husbands are philandering, and the chances are usually higher that they are, these young grooms often unhappy with having been forced into the marriage.

We forget, too, that in the Philippines, more than 100,000 births each year are to girls below the age of 20, each birth presenting specific risks because of the mother's young age. The children of these young mothers also face more formidable challenges for survival, since their mothers are inexperienced, and tend to have fewer economic resources to raise the child.

These births are simplistically blamed on young people's "promiscuity" and "raging hormones" (you'd be surprised at how many of the pregnancies occurred with only one encounter), followed of course by the couple being marched off into a shotgun wedding. Talk about jumping out of the frying pan into the fire—the births come each year. Some of the births to girls in the 15- to 19-year-old age group are already their third or fourth.

Conservatives argue that sex education programs entice the young to have sex. They insist that sex education is best done within the family, but most Filipino families prefer silence on the issue, a silence that can bring about disastrous consequences. Talk with doctors serving in rural areas and they'll tell you of parents bringing in a child who's pregnant, but the parents themselves are still in denial.

We saw, too, recently, that case of a 12-year-old suicide in Davao City, with possible sexual abuse. If we had strong sexual and reproductive health programs, the girl would have been in a better position to defend herself or, if the abuse could not be prevented, to be able to look for help.

Hanging ovaries

Sexually active or not, young Filipinos need reproductive and sexual health programs. I'm not referring to those "hanging ovaries" sex education classes where the class giggles through a boring lecture with anatomical charts showing disembodied penises, uteri and ovaries. Young people need the most basic of education; many young girls and boys don't even know the basics of sexual hygiene. They need to know bodies belong to people, in relationships, with values that will either put them at risk, or protect them, from unwanted pregnancies, from sexually transmitted infections. They need to know that sexual and reproductive health relates to other healthy practices, and that means avoiding junk foods, smoking, drinking, drugs.

We know that young people suffer from poor health because of poverty, which means limited access to information and services. But in the case of reproductive and sexual health, the converse is also true: poor reproductive health contributes to a worsening of poverty. Think of the young couple who starts having a family when they can barely support themselves. That's an end to schooling, an end to opportunities for better jobs. In many cases, it can also mean young people being driven into new situations of risks such as sex work.

So, on one hand, often in the name of morality, we deny our young reproductive and sexual health programs. On the other hand, we exploit the young's sexuality to sell products: our billboards, our television screens are filled with happy, healthy faces and bodies endorsing everything from cell phones to soft drinks.

Space, options

I've wondered if our ambivalence with young people's sexuality reflects our fear of young people. We see them mainly in terms of raging, uncontrollable hormones, yet shamelessly use them for entertainment, for advertising—or for outright sale.

We talk about how young people are our future and indeed they are. But by de-sexualizing them, we convert them into mere commodities, their value perceived in market terms. Why worry about family planning, I've heard commentators, when we can export more Filipinos to bring in more dollars?

When we oppose sex education and family planning for the young, we also betray our own condescending views about them. We don't want to see them as being mature enough to handle options, to make wise decisions about their bodies and their lives. The ones who will suffer the most are the ones who are young, and poor, because their lack of options will lead to new vicious cycles of powerlessness and poverty.

Ultimately, reproductive and sexual health is about young people's rights. Denying those rights is the worst form of social injustice.

(*This column is a modified version of a plenary paper I presented last month at the 4th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health, held in India.*)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Dictators can't be benevolent

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE LETTER titled "Filipinos can learn from Musharraf." (INQUIRER, 11/20/07)

First, the late Ninoy Aquino should not have been compared with Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto. Though they both come from the influential rich class, they could not be similar. And, it is also wrong to suggest that the situation in Pakistan could have been similar in the Philippines had Ninoy not been murdered.

Second, Congress, in 2005, should not have given the Medal of Achievement to Gen. Pervez Musharraf. It was complete stupidity, if not lunacy, for duly elected members of Congress to confer the award on a person who seized power in a military coup. To debate on whether or not the award should be recalled would be a worthless exercise; but declaring the award null and void and explaining why it is so would, perhaps, help members of Congress regain their credibility.

Third, there can never be a benevolent dictator. Using the country's economic progress as a measure of good leadership is an old-school notion which have been exploited by dictators and by authoritarian regimes, as well as by countries who had histories of human rights abuses.

Democracy does not develop overnight, it matures over the time. It heavily depends on how strong a country's democratic institutions—most particularly, the judiciary which must be independent—are. The strength of democracy depends on the strength of its legal institutions. That's why Musharraf is systematically going after judges and lawyers because—he has admitted this—they are blocking his way. He justifies his actions on the pretext of saving Pakistan. It is sad that thousands of lawyers and judges all over Pakistan have been arrested or placed under house arrest.

What is happening in Pakistan today? Laws and ordinances are used to silence critics, media outlets have been closed, and journalists are under attack by the government.

—DANILO REYES,
29, 1/F Tung Lo Wan Village,
Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong

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LPP's ad failed to explain 'cash gifts'

THE LEAGUE OF PROVINCES OF THE Philippines placed a full-page ad titled "Stop the Political Noise, Focus on Economic Growth." It was signed by 29 provincial governors. (INQUIRER, 10/23/07) Apart from being a badly written statement, the declaration did not help clarify matters regarding the distribution of "cash gifts" in Malacañang. The statement insults the intelligence of the public and was intended only to deflect the political heat from the beleaguered Malacañang tenant.

To the provincial governors, we say: Stop the culture of bribery and corruption, stop the culture of lies and political cover-up, stop the culture of sycophancy; focus on transparency and good governance!

Incidentally, some of the signatories to the full-page statement are provincial executives of poor and underdeveloped provinces—Eastern Samar, Occidental Mindoro, Abra, Marinduque and Sultan Kudarat, among others.

—FERDIE T. SIBAL,
18 Green Leaves St.,
Capitol Green Village,
Tandang Sora, Quezon City

A little more respect for Pope Benedict

I AM AN INQUIRER SUBSCRIBER AND FELT A BIT queasy when I read the headline of the story "Pinoys formally welcome Benedict's ambassador." (INQUIRER, 11/14/07)

I blinked and thought that, maybe, it was not the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, that the article was referring to. However, true enough, it was.

It seems that using at least the word "Pope" would have been more respectful and correct. At any rate, I am happy to read in the news report that Archbishop Angel Lagdameo expressed "the Filipinos' wish for Pope Benedict XVI to visit the Philippines."

—DINA D. LUCENARIO,
Valero Tower, Valero Street,
Makati City

It's imperative for GSIS to invest outside RP

PLEASE ALLOW US TO CLARIFY THE MATTERS raised in Honesto General's column titled, "GSIS: Pitfalls of investing abroad." (INQUIRER, 11/7/07)

It is true that under present market conditions, dollar-denominated investments have to deal with the possibility of loss due to the appreciation of the peso-dollar exchange rate. But then again, this is only one among many other factors that the Government Service Insurance System considered in investing abroad.

The GSIS board decided to push through with the Global Investment Program precisely because it will enable the GSIS to find ways of mitigating foreign currency losses (through the use of multi-currency instruments) and to look for incremental returns from the global markets (through the expertise of global fund managers).

It may be easy to say that we should keep our investments in pesos, but the real situation on the ground dictates otherwise.

The local capital market is too thin and too small for GSIS investments. As of September 2007, the total investment portfolio of GSIS was P385 billion. The GSIS already holds P136 billion worth of debt securities, P16 billion worth of stocks, and P115 billion worth of member loans.

General's suggestion that we ask the trust departments of banks to manage our investments is well taken, but late. We have this in place since last year after going through a transparent and competitive process. The GSIS has already given mandates to the trust departments of the top three local banks—Metrobank, Banco de Oro and Bank of the Philippine Islands—to manage P6 billion worth of investments. We will double this amount by next year.

Despite our best efforts, the GSIS still has more than P60 billion in short-term deposits earning approximately 5 percent. Short-term—because of the absence of local instruments where funds of this magnitude can be placed.

Even if the GSIS invests $1 billion abroad, a large portion of our investments portfolio—88 percent—will still be in peso assets. By any global standard, our portfolio is too biased on the peso and too heavy on local credit. This is not a good investment practice.

We at the GSIS are mandated to invest the funds of our members to meet the requirements of safety/security, liquidity and yield. There is no other way to do this but to invest abroad. This is the reality of present-day investments—a reality that we must learn to accept at the soonest time possible.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president, Public Affairs,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City

President Arroyo's fast-emerging image

WITH THE SPATE OF SCANDALS INVOLVING President Macapagal-Arroyo and administration officials (e.g., "Hello Garci," ZTE National Broadband Network, "cash gifts" in the Palace) it seems that GMA is fast-losing her moral stature. She is fast losing the image of a goodie-goodie, workaholic President with whom I could sympathize whenever she was attacked by "political hawks" who wanted her out of office.

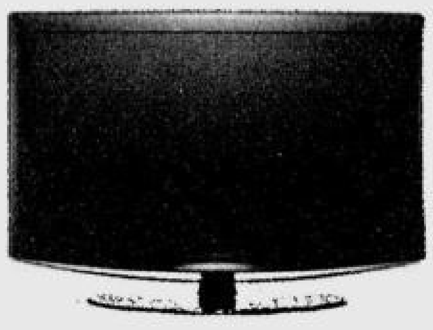
In my view, what is fast-emerging now is the annoying image of a leader who knows her way around the political world and who will do anything to keep her grip on power. With 2010 not too far ahead, the temptation to make a lot of hay while the sun shines must be difficult—not just for her but also for other government officials—to ignore.

Not everybody is given the chance to be great. Many started right but ended up humiliated. May GMA carve a noble niche in our history and be remembered as a leader who, after recognizing her errors, reformed herself and opted to lead righteously.

Life is short and we can't bring with us any of the material things we worked hard for, legally or otherwise. Truly, the best legacy we can bequeath to our children is a good and untarnished name.

It is best for GMA to heed the calls for reform now being made by some bishops, officials and civil society. She has to act now before it is too late.

—THERESA PILI-NISPEROS,
Tondo, Manila



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Baguio mayor borrows idea from Canada on trash plan

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY GOVernment will do for households what some politicians have been promising them for decades: provide a trash bin for each household.

This is a waste management plan that the city has imported from Canada to help clean up the summer capital, said Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr who was in Vaughn, Canada, last week.

But here's the catch. Bautista said the city government will tax households more if their daily trash exceeds the bin's capacity.

Baguio has imposed a strict garbage collection program which began in October when trash collectors left tons of garbage bags spoiling on streets for nearly a week to "teach residents a lesson."

The city collects only biodegradable trash and plastic refuse if households segregate them in marked garbage bags.

The mayor said the city government had been compelled to cut back its daily garbage collection because it had shut down its only open dump to comply with environmental laws.

It is hosting the International Conference of Solid Waste Management at a hotel that lies far from communities where trash bags are pooled in selected street corners.

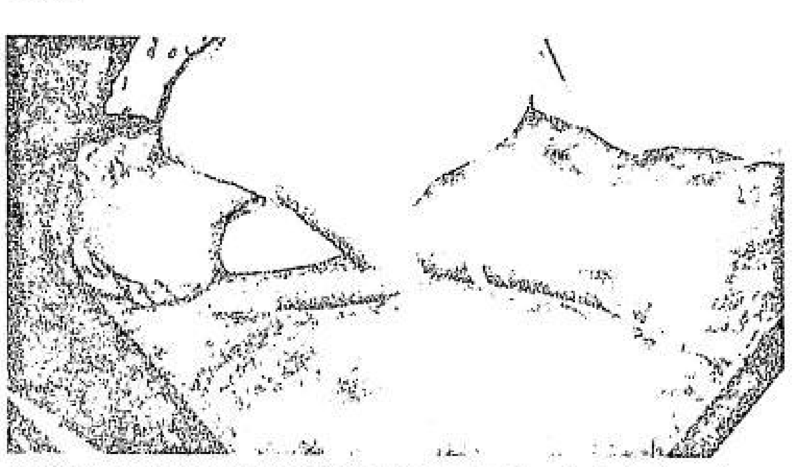
Bautista said household trash reveals a lot about the city's lifestyle and its consumption patterns.

But the latest figures indicate that Baguio has failed to address overpopulation.

The average trash collected by the city's environment office used to reach 288 metric tons when three shopping malls began operating in the city, but recycling operations have reduced that average by 26 percent (75 tons), according to the city mayor's office. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

70 dead in parasite infection; entire Zambo village afflicted

A RESIDENT of Barangay Moyo, too weak to stand, rests in a hospital after suffering from capillariasis infection. JULIE ALIPALA



FLUIDS are fed intravenously to 10-year-old Angelo Lantubo, whose father Filomeno, is also suffering from capillariasis. JULIE ALIPALA

SIAYAN, ZAMBOANGA Del Norte—An intestinal parasite infection caused by worms found in freshwater fish and shrimps is transforming the village of Moyo here into a community of emaciated men, women and children.

At least 70 of them had already died.

Doctors blamed the residents for refusing to heed warnings against eating fish and shrimps from a river that runs through their village, but the villagers said they have little choice.

The freshwater shrimps and fish are the only food they could afford.

As the capillariasis worm, that is found in the shrimps and fish, sent the villagers to hospitals, another necessity that they could barely afford has been added to their list of limited choices—medicines.

Capillariasis is the end result of the village's poverty, according to local officials. Soon, the end result could become death.

Take the case of Pacito Ebol, one of the villagers.

He died in October because of capillariasis. Three weeks ago, his wife died, too, of the same infection.

No one was left to care for their four children—Rowin, 11; Gery, 17; Aisa, 4; and Analiza, 2. They, too, have capillariasis.

The National Center for Health Promotion of the Department of Health defined capillariasis as an intestinal parasitism caused by the nematode *capilliaria philippinensis.*

These worms thrive in freshwater shrimps and fish, food that is abundant in the village river but lethal if not cooked properly.

What these worms do to the human body is simple, but frightening—they eat up the body's nutrients that could lead to slow, but certain death.

Local health officials said more than 300 villagers have been suffering from capillariasis.

The worms' presence in the stomach of an infected person also triggers chronic diarrhea that could lead to dehydration.

Health officials said, if left untreated with deworming medicines, capillariasis is fatal.

But how could a community that is forced to eat capillariasis-contaminated food for sheer lack of money to buy safer food afford to buy medicines?

"All of us are sick now but we do not have money to buy the medicines needed to make us well," 11-year-old Rowin Ebol said.

Rowin said without parents to support him and his three siblings, they have learned to find comfort in each other.

Dr. Raymund Nadela, Siayan health officer, said Rowin is among the 350 patients from Barangay Moyo, who were recently evacuated for treatment.

Julieta Yano, a doctor at the Sindangan District Hospital, told the INQUIRER that many of the patients were so weak they could not even stand.

Among them were 50-year-old Filomeno Lantubo and his son Angelo, 10.

"They are very thin now. They could not even move because the disease has rendered them so weak," Yano said.

Yano said the rising number of cases of capillariasis has become alarming. "We should act fast," she said.

Local officials have already declared an outbreak when it was found that at least 70 people have already died since April.

Emeliano Villalon, chair of Barangay Moyo, said 32 adults and nine children died of capillariasis in October.

Despite statements from local health officials that the infection has already killed so many people, Dr. Carmencita Icao, Zamboanga del Norte health chief, said provincial health statistics showed only three capillariasis deaths.

"The others died because of chronic diarrhea," she said.

Icao said no tests have been made on those who died earlier so she had no basis to say if these deaths were caused by capillariasis.

Asked what could have possibly caused the spread of the infection, Icao said: "Blame it on the villagers."

She said "they don't know how to defecate and don't know how to follow prescription."

"It's a pity that they die, but they die because they could not even follow simple instructions," she said. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

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2 kids die in Taytay fire

TAYTAY, RIZAL—Two children died while their two other siblings were in critical condition after a two-hour fire destroyed their house in Taytay, Rizal Monday, police said yesterday.

Chief Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Calabarzon police director, identified the fatalities as Eliza Mae Torres, 5, and her brother Anton Daniel, 3.

The burned bodies of the two were almost beyond recognition when firemen recovered them from the debris, Padilla said.

Wounded were the victims' sisters Alexa, 11, and year-old Andrea Katrina, who are now being treated at the Rizal Medical Center in Pasig City for severe burns all over their bodies.

The children were alone in the house as their mom, Geraldine, went to a neighbor to have her cellular phone charged. ***Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon***

Incendiary bombs found in school

DIGOS CITY—Police tightened security after the discovery of two incendiary bombs at the Davao del Sur National High School here on Monday.

The discovery of the bombs—placed inside separate toilets—occurred three days after a powerful explosion killed one person and wounded seven others in Kidapawan City in North Cotabato.

Sgt. Jose Conseja, of the Army's explosive and ordnance team, said the bombs were made from two bottles with gasoline and fitted with wicks.

The wicks were already lighted when a janitor discovered the explosives.

Conseja said although the explosion would not be as powerful as other bombs, it could burn the school's buildings. ***Orlando Dinoy and Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao***

NFA hikes rice buying price

COTABATO CITY—The National Food Authority announced it has increased its buying price for "palay" from P10 to P11 pesos per kg.

Kitem Kadatuan, NFA-Shariff Kabunsuan provincial director, said the price adjustment was meant to help farmers meet the high cost of production, among other reasons.

Kadatuan said the NFA's decision to increase its procurement price was also due to the continuing increase in prices of fuel and other basic commodities.

Shariff Kabunsuan, the newest province in the country, is highly agricultural with rice, corn, coconut, tropical fruits as among its leading products. ***Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao***

More village, SK polls set

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) set in December to January 2008 the dates for the holding of the election of the presidents of the Association of Barangay Captains (ABC) and the Federated Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) in the city, municipal and provincial levels.

DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2007-151 released on Wednesday set the dates and guidelines in the holding of municipal and component city chapters of the ABC on Dec. 11.

Winners at the municipal and city level will then elect the league's president on Dec. 29.

Election for president and other officers of the ABC national chapter will be on Jan. 29, 2008.

The DILG also issued Memorandum Circular No. 2007-160 establishing the date and guidelines for the election of the SK federation president and other officers.

On Dec. 6, SK chairs in the municipal and city level will hold elections.

Winners in the municipal and city level will then elect the provincial or metropolitan federated president on Dec. 17. ***Vicente S. Labro and Kit Bagaipo, Inquirer Visayas***

Break-in at Comelec baffles police

TAGUM CITY—Unidentified men broke into the Davao del Norte office of the Commission on Elections here on Sunday.

But as of yesterday, police said they are still clueless as to the motive for the break-in.

Supt. Dario Gunabe, city police chief, said the scene of the crime operation (Soco) of the provincial police has already been called in to help in the investigation.

Initial investigation revealed that the break-in likely occurred late Saturday.

Election assistant Leah Mamites told police she discovered the break-in when she went to the office to get something around 6:50 a.m. on Sunday.

Mamites said documents, CDs and keys were scattered on the Comelec office's floor when she came in.

"The drawers were already pulled open," she said.

Mamites said she immediately informed Comelec provincial supervisor Mario Casquejo about the discovery.

Investigators said robbery might not be the motive because the perpetrators did not take cash in one of the drawers that were pulled open. *Frinston Lim, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Suspects in journalist's ambush can't leave RP

LUCENA CITY—A REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC) judge here yesterday issued a hold departure order against two men suspected to be behind the ambush on Lucena-based INQUIRER correspondent Delfin Mallari Jr. more than seven months ago.

Judge Norma Chionglo Sia, of Branch 56 of the Lucena RTC, ruled that suspects Armando Encanto and Renato Sudla should be barred from leaving the country while the frustrated murder and attempted murder cases filed against them are being tried in court.

P320,000 bail

Both Encanto and Sudla are out on bail after paying P320,000 each after the court issued warrants for their arrest.

The two, who are both in their 40s, are members of the Tau Gamma Phi Fraternity, the same fraternity to which incumbent Gov. Raffy Nantes belongs.

Mallari named Nantes as the brains of the failed attempt on his life, which the governor repeatedly denied.

Lawyers Marcelino Arias Jr. and Elizabeth Matta tried to block Sia's order by assuring the judge that their clients would not go abroad to evade the charges against them.

Sia, however, doubted the lawyers' guarantee as she instructed the clerk of court to immediately draft the hold departure order.

Delaying tactic

For the second time in as many hearings, the counsels of Encanto and Sudla moved to defer the scheduled arraignment, saying the petition for review that they filed before the Department of Justice (DOJ) has yet to be resolved.

The petition, which was filed last Sept. 27, assailed the result of the preliminary investigation conducted by Lucena assistant prosecutor Manuel Garcia who endorsed the filing of criminal charges against the suspects.

Arias said they would also file a separate motion for reinvestigation of the case.

Tempers flared as lawyer Vicente Joyas, Mallari's counsel, questioned Arias' request for postponement of the arraignment.

Joyas argued that the prescription period of the petition filed by the accused's lawyers before the DOJ has already lapsed.

Sia said the arraignment should resume "to give the adverse party (Mallari) an opportunity to air his side."

"The court wants to have jurisdiction over the persons and of the case. This court wants the arraignment to start so the case can proceed. What do you fear then?" Sia told the suspects' lawyers. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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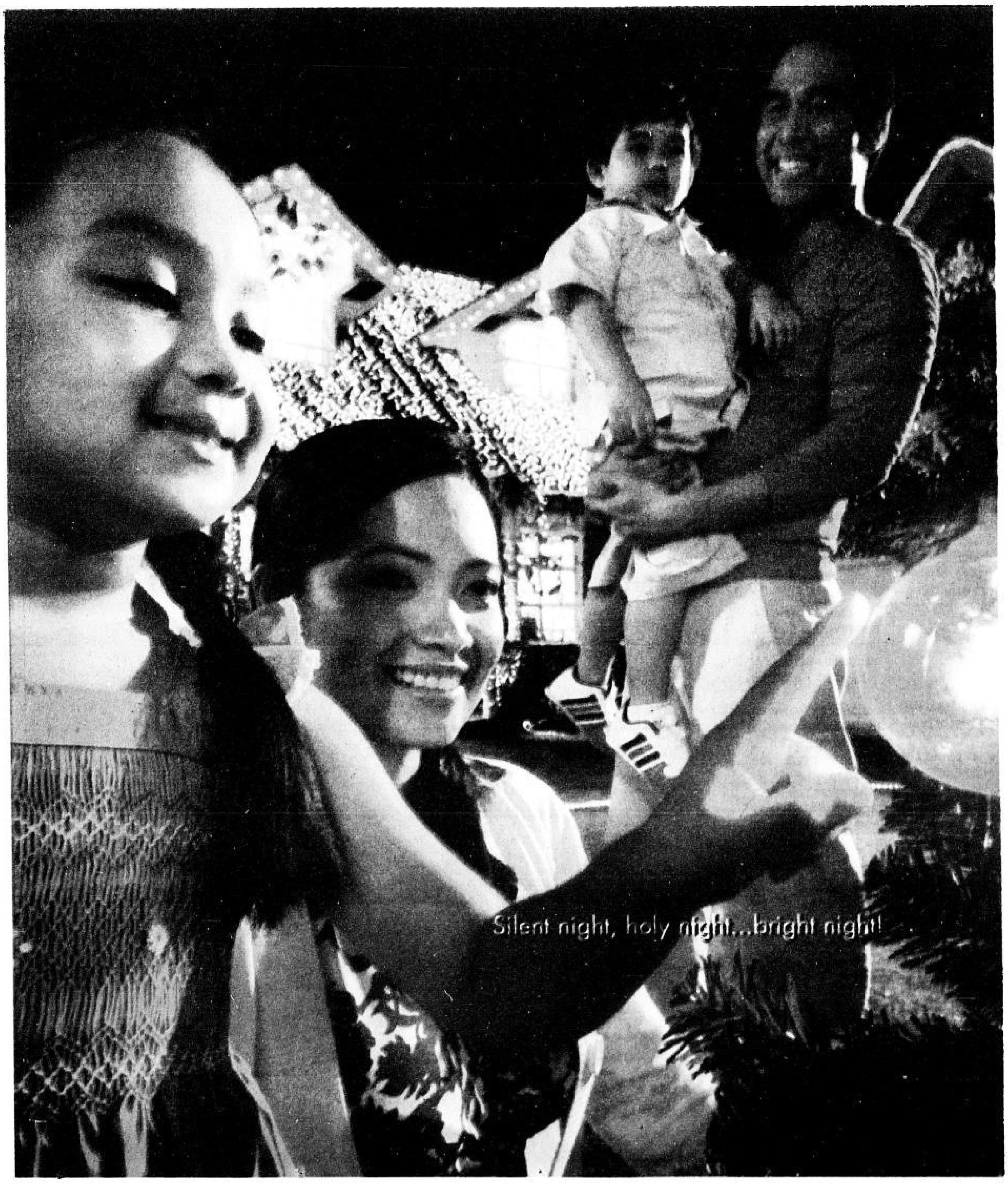
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Where have all the 'mambunong' gone?

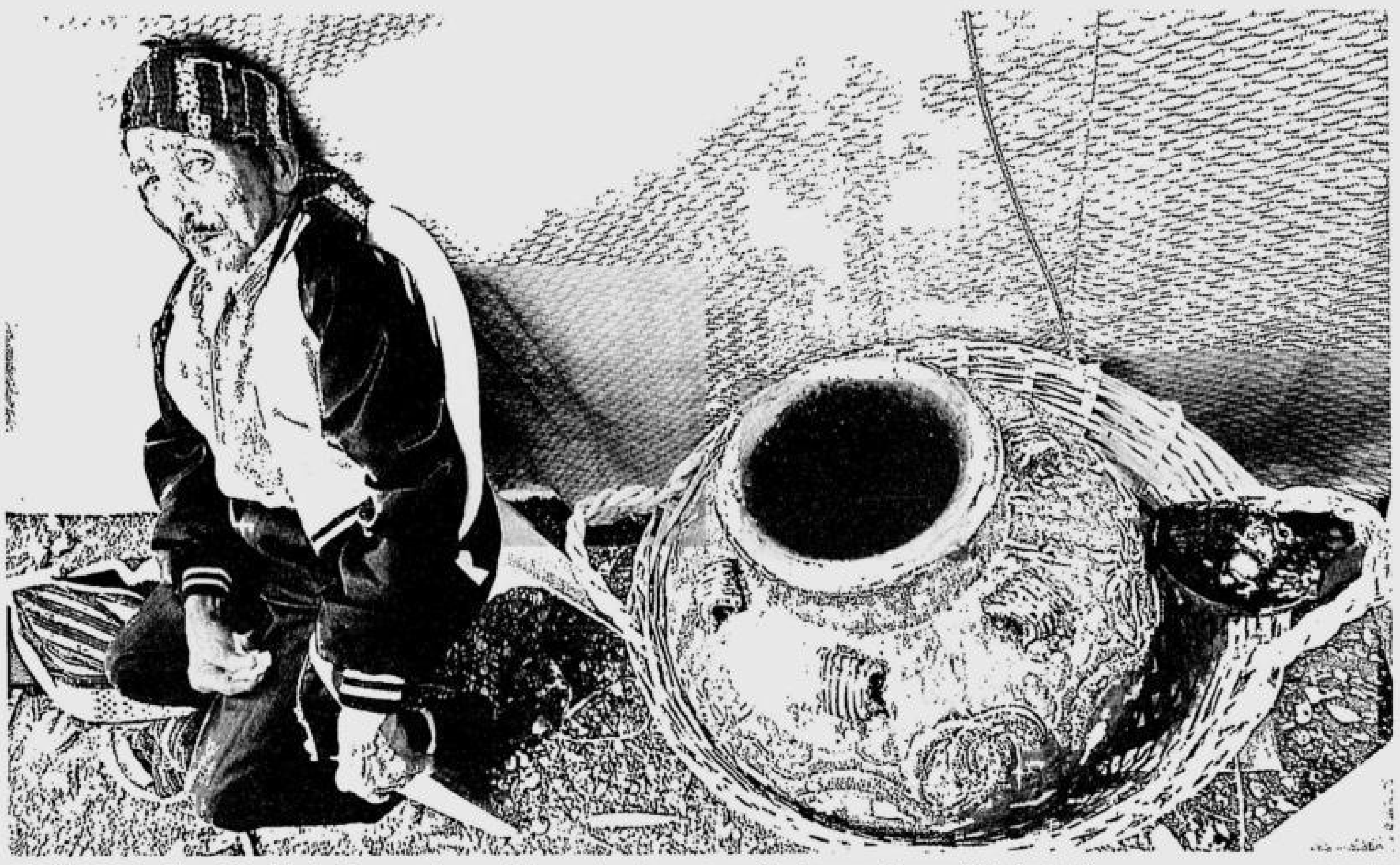
By Delmar Cariño
La Trinidad, Benguet

BETRAYING AGE and wrinkled foreheads, Benguet's native priests still read pig's bile and convey the message of blessing or misfortune.

The priests, called "*mambunong*," still chant prayers with gusto, amazing folks with their keen memory of ritual passages, genealogy and the names of gods and spirits.

No one knows exactly how many of them are left. But elders and local officials say that for as long as the province is culturally bound, the *mambunong* will remain relevant.

They say today's younger generation of Igorot, educated and Christianized, is slowly defying the priests' presence, sometimes with contempt. But respect for them has remained, says Gov. Nestor Fongwan.



SANTIAGO Berking, 83, of Atok, Benguet, is one of the province's most sought after *mambunong* (ritual priest). EV ESPIRITU

The priests came for last week's celebration of Benguet's 107th Foundation Day in the capital town of La Trinidad. They presided over prayers that led to the sacrifice of 40 pigs.

In fact, Fongwan says, he asked the *mambunong* to include in their prayers that the province's vegetable industry be spared from the adversities of free trade.

Explaining the celebration's theme "Unfolding Benguet Towards Globalization," Fongwan says that "we pay respect to tradition that our ancestors passed on to the present generation but at the same time, we should also be realistic to confront global developments that impact on our mining and vegetable industries."

> 'Many of them have died and the times have made the transition to a new group of priests difficult'

But officials and elders admit that the *mambunong* is slowly disappearing due to economic reasons and modernization.

"Many have died and the times have made the transition to a new group of priests difficult," says Joseph Cosente, a Kankanaey elder and former board member.

Board Member Marciano Inso, an Ibaloi lawyer, says the declining practice of holding a "*cañao*" (traditional feast) has caused the disappearance of the *mambunong*.

The prohibitive cost of butchering pigs has forced families to become practical, he says.

Kabayan Mayor Florentino Aquisan says his town still calls for the *mambunong* but the officials are often asked to make the ceremonies simple and not as elaborate as the way old-timers did.

He blames the rising cost of black pigs as the culprit.

Peter Bigawen, a farmer from Kapangan town, says remote villages still have native priests, but prayers are now often said by Catholic priests and lay leaders.

"The cost of adhering to the *mambunong*'s request could be costly. One pig may be butchered, but when the *mambunong* says something is wrong with the bile, another pig must be sacrificed," Bigawen, 65, says.

Roberto Wagang, 80, a *mambunong* from Bakun town, agrees.

"*Isardeng tako et di tan nay ay nan Kristiano tako* (We better stop our old ways since we are already Christians)," he says. "*Mamati ak pay laeng ngem laydek ay di abig di nanakay di makissayan* (I still believe in our role, but we should ease the elders' rules on taboo practices), he says.

But the *mambunong* is here to stay.

"We cannot say they are disappearing. They are like banana plants; when they fall, another shoot will grow," says Robert Matthew, 72, a *mambunong* from Bakun.

An Ibaloi *mambunong*, Perez Manio, 79, says he and his colleagues are often consulted when a person's illness remains despite being confined in the hospital.

"Our prayers center on calling for the help of people we consider the roots of our ancestors," he says.

Powers

Biano Baucas, an Ibaloi educator, says the native priests are looked up to because of their perceived powers to heal, interpret omens and summon good tidings.

In his book "Traditional Beliefs and Cultural Practices in Benguet (2003)," Baucas says the *mambunong* can preside over 30 rituals and call on 30 gods and goddesses.

The prayers cover all aspects of human life, like harvest, travel, sickness, fortune, family relations, dreams, misfortune and appetite.

These prayers are often recited in chants, called the "*badiw*" or "*day-eng*."

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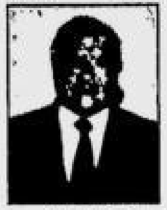
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Message from the Chairman of the Board of 2007

This year the Philippine Board of Surgery celebrates its 38th Annual Meeting on Saturday December 1, 2007 at 6:00 PM at the EDSA Shangri-La, Mandaluyong City.

The Philippine Board of Surgery (PBS) was founded in November 1968. Eight visionaries, who deemed it necessary then and up to the present to have an independent body to certify general surgeons organized it with the sole purpose of elevating the standards of surgical practice, training and education in the country.

Only diplomates of the Philippine Board of Surgery who had passed the written and oral examinations are certified to practice General Surgery.

It was officially incorporated and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 19, 1969. The original incorporators were Dr. Cesar de Padua – Chairman, Dr. Vicente Q. Arguelles – Vice Chairman, Dr. Constante N. Firme – Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. Jose P. Caedo, Jr., Dr. Romeo E. Estrellado, Dr. Antonio O. Cabral, Dr. Jose S. Ramirez and Dr. Prudencio S. Samson – Directors.

The first written examination was given November 28, 1970 and the first oral examination was given April 3, 1971.

The Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS) officially designated the PBS as its examining board in General Surgery in 1976 and thus in December 1977, PBS certification became a requirement to be a fellow of the PCS in general surgery.

The PBS in 1980 initiated the " In Service Training examination" for surgical residents in PCS accredited training programs to evaluate core knowledge and skills of the residents. In the same year the Board approved the policy that only residents of accredited training programs were eligible to take the certifying examination.

The Philippine Society of General Surgeons (PSGS) in 1999, the surgical specialty society of general surgeons under the PCS, enshrined in its constitution that only diplomates of the PBS could become fellows of the Society. In essence, the PBS has become the certifying board of the PSGS.

Currently there are 1,446 board certified general surgeons in the country. Seventy will be inducted tonight making a total of 1,516. One hundred thirty four (8.84%) are females.

The inducting officer and keynote speaker for this annual meeting will be Dr. Vicente Q. Arguelles, the founding Vice chairman of the PBS.

Our sincerest gratitude to all the Directors of 2007, all the members of the Board of Governors and most of all to all the examiners who through all these years have sacrificed not only their precious time in making the PBS what it is now, with the singular goal of upholding the standard of training and practice of General Surgery in its highest for the care of the Filipino patient.

Congratulations to the new diplomates of 2007!

Narciso S. Navarro, Jr. MD, FPCS, FPSGS, FACS

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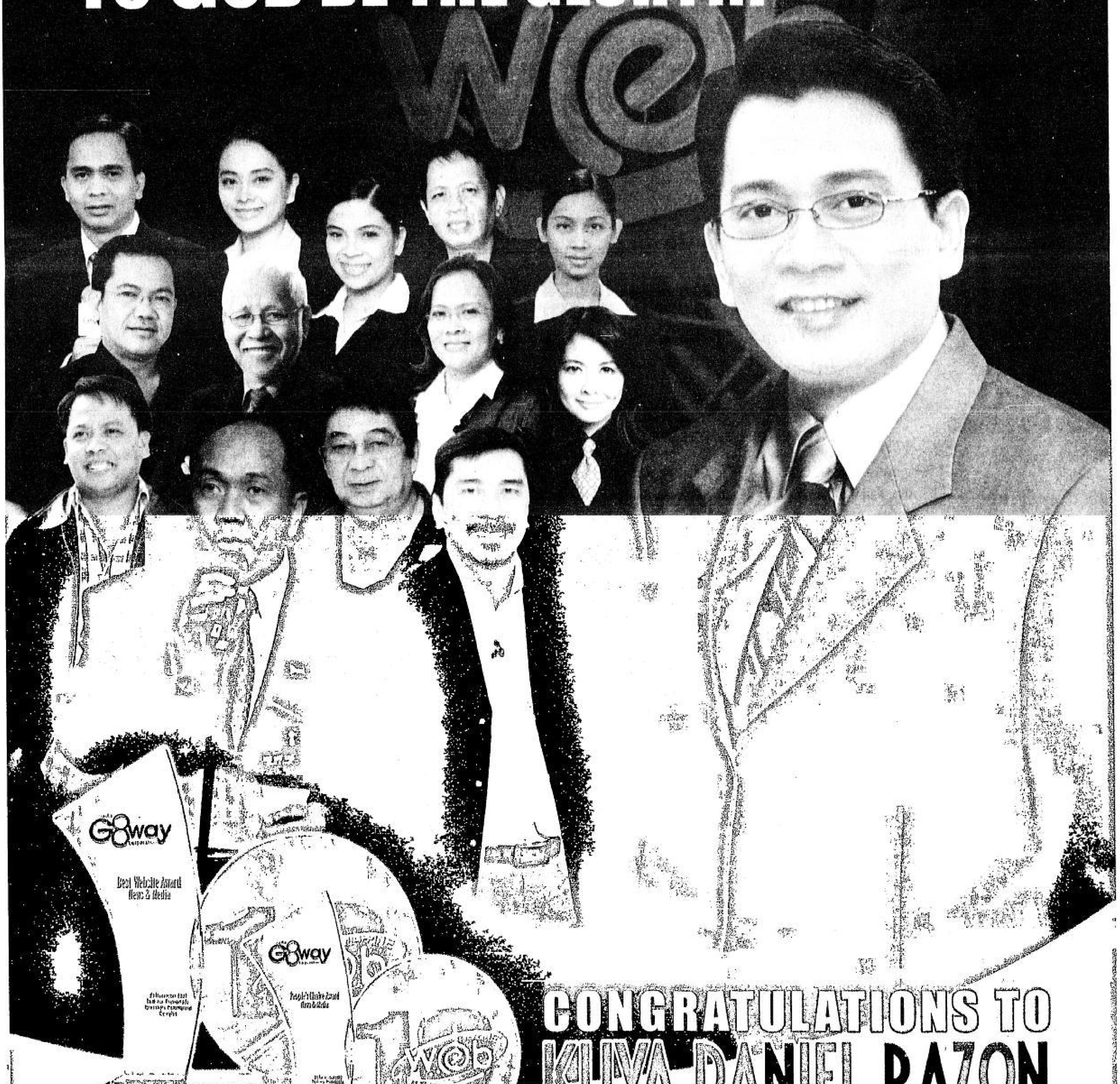
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Larger number of boys than girls drop out by Grade 5

COMING INTO THEIR OWN: Students of the Maharlika Elementary School in Taguig attend Saturday madrasah school. This is the first school year the DepEd offers the madrasah curriculum in selected public elementary schools in Metro Manila. Aside from the regular subjects like the "3 Rs," there are lessons in the Arabic language and Islamic values. REM ZAMORA

From page A1

ment. As many girls enter Grade 1 as boys.

Over the years, however, girls tend to stay in school longer while boys drop out in larger numbers. This becomes evident starting Grade 5, when the boy dropout rates begin to outpace the girl rates significantly.

Data from the Department of Education (DepEd) show that high school graduating classes have an average of 6 percent more girls than boys (53 percent versus 47 percent).

Why are boys dropping out more than girls?

A National Statistics Office (NSO) survey in 2001 asked the question "Why are children dropping out of school?"

Almost one-third of children aged 5-17 years (31.4 percent) said they were "not interested." Over 28 percent said "they could not afford" schooling with the number increasing as the child got older.

Less than 10 percent said they left school for "employment" with the highest level among 15-17 year olds (12.4 percent). If you add "helping the family business" to the employment answer (9.1 percent), the combined total (19 percent) was still only a poor third to the first two answers.

What constitutes "not interested in school"? The survey was not explicit, but in subsequent small sample surveys, a lack of achievement—notably the inability to read with comprehension—was a major cause.

It appears that girls display a better ability to read at a younger age and thus score better in achievement tests overall. Is this inherent in girls? Probably not. It might just be that girls tend to be more diligent in studying than boys.

Incidental costs

What constitutes "cannot afford school"?

While public education is tuition-free, there are incidental costs borne by families, including transportation, daily meals, uniforms, school supplies and other materials assigned by teachers.

This reason becomes more salient for older students since high schools tend to be located farther away than elementary schools.

What about "employment" and "helping the family business"? Clearly these reasons weigh heavily on poorer households. But the employment picture does not necess bear this out. Many young outs are not working.

On top of dropping out of school before completion, graduating high school boys also have less ambition to go on to college than girls. In February 2005, the DepEd did a nationwide survey of graduating seniors to determine their plans.

More girls were interested in going to college than boys (58 percent vs 52 percent). Interest was defined as having taken at least one college entrance exam. On the other hand, more boys were interested in work than girls (20 percent vs 17 percent).

A significant portion of both were equally unsure of what they wanted to do (28 percent vs 24 percent). Given the higher graduation rate and the greater desire to go on to college, this generation will see up to 20 percent more women going to university than men. Within a generation, girls will have a better education overall than boys and the job market will reflect this.

When boys and girls grow up, they will tend toward marriage. Given today's economy and lifestyle, chances are both husband and wife will have to work. Given the likelihood that the wife has a better or more complete education, chances are she will have a more steady and better paying job.

Squaring 2 realities

Our society, however, is male-oriented. We recognize the husband as the head of household even if the wife may be the real breadwinner. How will these two realities square? I fear that in many cases, there will be underlying tensions that will result in increasing problems of domestic violence and spousal abuse.

Thus, it is important to keep boys in school to give them a chance at finishing, moving on to college, and/or getting jobs that provide adequate pay and fulfillment.

Start in elementary

For this to happen, we have to go down to the early elementary grades when lifelong learning skills need to be developed and good habits formed. We need to build a stronger capacity for learning among boys (and girls) if we are to succeed in turning around the dropout situation for both. This is a longer-term endeavor.

In the immediate term, however, we need to find ways to keep boys engaged in formal schooling from Grade 5 onward.

At the high school level, the answer might be in organized sports and technical-vocational education. The former can provide an incentive; the latter a different context closer to boys' ambitions.

If we do not do something drastic to help boys finish formal basic education, the next generation will be one of male underachievers, if we are not there already.

Pockets of hope for Muslim schoolchildren

From page A1

the figure is half that at 33.6 percent.

For the two other Mindanao regions with significant Muslim populations, the same figures are 50.4 percent (Region IX—Western Mindanao) and 55.7 percent (Region XII—Central Mindanao) s compared to the rest of Mindanao at 61-62 percent.

The pattern continues in high school. Cohort survival rates for the ARMM, Western Mindanao and Central Mindanao are lower than the rest of Mindanao which in turn are lower than the Philippine average.

In terms of literacy among women, the Philippine norm is relatively equitable among households of all income classes (93-99 percent). This reflects a long period of sustained education and opportunity.

For the rest of Mindanao, the literacy rate for women is also relatively even (89.5-99.4 percent). For the ARMM, on the other hand, only 58.5 percent of women from the poorest households are literate. (This is a level comparable to war-ravaged Rwanda and Ghana in Africa.)

Armed conflict

A good part of the reason has to do with the disruption of education among children due to armed conflict. Almost 42 percent of households surveyed in 2000 said that they were caught in the midst of conflict which disrupted schooling. Of this number, 65 percent had to stop schooling for more than seven months with close to 40 percent out of school for more than a year.

Despite the situation, does a limited and deficient education have to be the reality for Muslim Filipino children?

No. There are pockets of hope scattered in parts of Mindanao that should be supported, sustained and expanded.

Davao City has become a melting pot for Mindanao and destination for many Muslim Filipinos. In 2005, the city government began support for madaris education in response to the growing Muslim Filipino population in the city. Fifteen elementary schools and five high schools with significant Muslim populations were identified at the outset with a total of 52 asatidz (teachers) supported, two of whom were licensed teachers.

A school year later, the city increased the number of schools to 26 elementary (out of 262) and 16 high schools (out of 61). The number of asatidz supported by the local school board increased to 161.

Alive curriculum

The Davao City-supported curriculum is called ALIVE (Arabic and Islamic Values Education) and attempts to integrate the madrasah subjects in the standard national curriculum. Students take an hour of Alive four days a week after class hours. Two days are devoted to Arabic; two days to Islamic values.

In Sirawan Beach, Toril District, 90 percent of the community is Muslim. There, a different mode of madaris has been adopted by the Department of Education. Fridays are devoted solely to the madrasah curriculum. The remaining 10 percent who are not Muslim, take other electives in fulfillment of their academic requirements.

In Zamboanga City, a private elementary school—the Sarangbangon Learning Center (SLC)—provides a similar mixed curriculum for Muslim children, many of whom are Tausug refugees and migrants from Sulu.

This small private school has integrated Arabic language and Islamic values with the standard curriculum though the former replaces DepEd "classroom time" for lack of material time in the week.

Established as a mission school to educate Muslim Filipino children by a progressive Muslim from Sulu, SLC is now headed by a Christian principal who has used his strong science and math background to raise the standards of the school.

Where once, young Muslim children had difficulty finishing the basic education cycle, SLC now has graduates who are able to pass the local science high school entrance exams and go there for secondary schooling.

The three models suggest that change is possible to correct such a deficiency among Muslim Filipino communities. The key, however, is to build a madaris education system within and complementary to the regular education system.

Madaris education

The DepEd has gone a long way from nonsupport to putting in at least P100 million in the department budget in 2007. But the investment is still a pittance compared to the need and the number of Muslim Filipino children.

A systems approach to madaris education must build institutional capacity in four different areas:

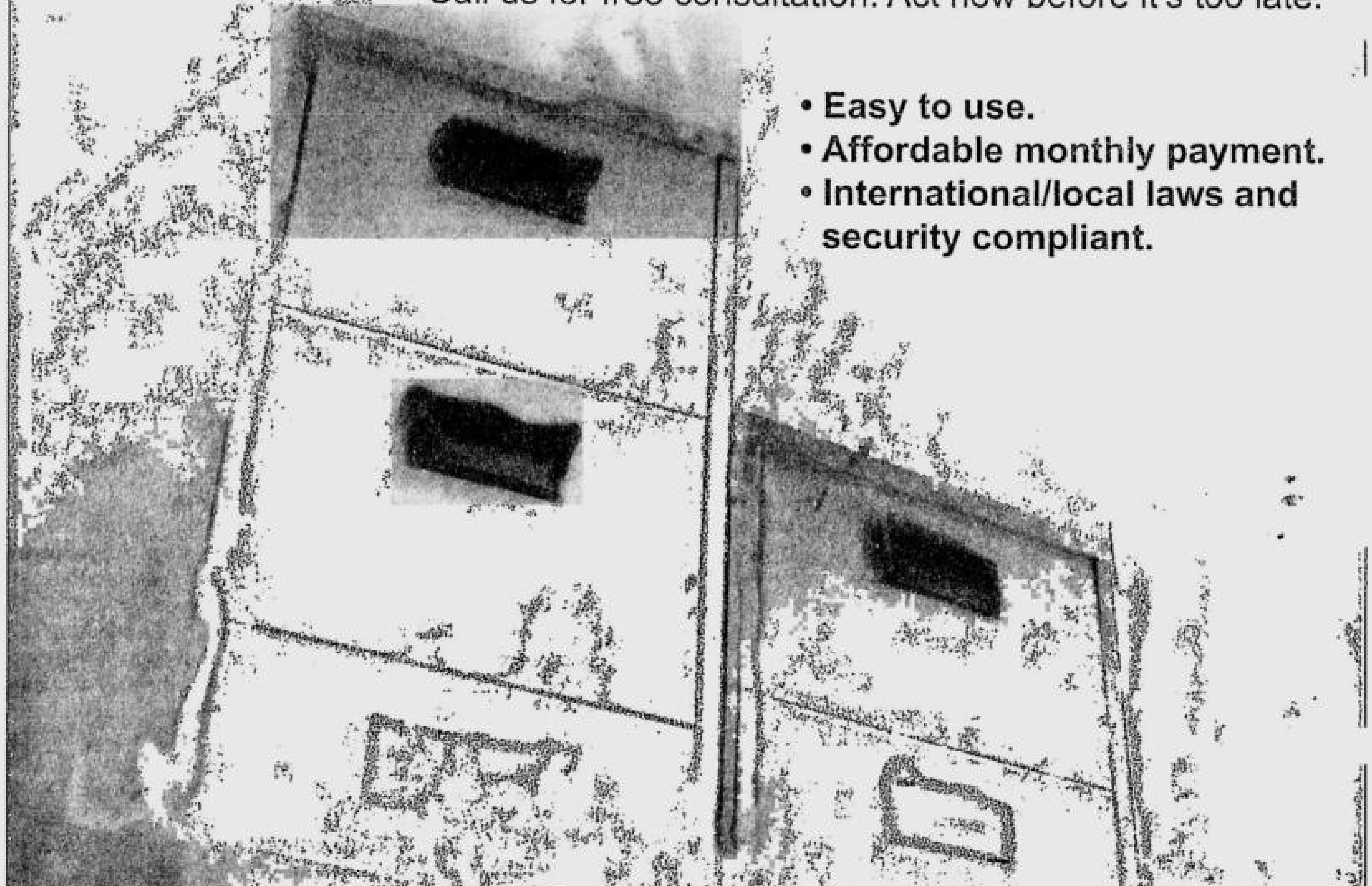
- Curriculum—What subject matter to cover and who decides content and coverage? This would include the development of quality textbooks to support teaching.
- Teachers—Can unlicensed ulamas and asatidz (i.e. without PRC teaching licenses) be recognized in the DepEd system and therefore included as nationally paid teachers? Should there be exceptions to the PRC and DepEd rules on hiring in this instance?
- Structure—How does madaris education get integrated in the regular schools? Should Arabic language and Islamic values follow grade levels as well?
- Pedagogy—Are Arabic language and Islamic values to be graded subjects (and part of the final graduation requirements)? Are these to be core subjects for Muslim Filipino children or electives?

The key: Increased investment in a competency-based madaris education system. But a lot more thought needs to go into the development of such a system within the larger school system.

Thankfully, Education Undersecretary Manaros Boransing has managed to develop the start of such a system.

In the end, denying Muslim Filipino children a chance at a complete education is a continuing recipe for disaster that will only fuel more underdevelopment in Mindanao.

Juan Miguel Luz



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Quake jolts Cabinet meet; GMA asks about 'apos'

From page A1

Cabinet officials had all risen from their seats and were moving en masse to the exit nearest the stairs.

As she was walking toward the doorway, Ms Arroyo asked an aide: "*Kumusta na yung mga bata* (How are the kids)?" (She has four grandchildren—two each from her two sons.)

She walked calmly as everyone else made way for her, down the red-carpeted stairway, out through the entrance and to the circular driveway, where the Cabinet officials milled around for several minutes.

Getting impatient, Ms Arroyo demanded to know: "How long do we have to stay here?" She was told that the centuries-old building had to be checked for safety.

The group was later informed that the meeting would be continued at the nearby Premier Guest House.

Ms Arroyo called the meeting to order at a little past 1 p.m., according to Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson and executive director of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD).

'What was that?'

Golez was in the middle of reporting on the status of the projects of the Bicol Rehabilitation Commission when the quake struck.

"During my presentation, all of a sudden Vice President Noli de Castro asked, 'What was that? A quake?' I didn't feel it that time. Suddenly, the chandeliers began to sway," Golez recalled.

He said members of the Presidential Security Group were "quick to react to protect the President" while the giant chandeliers were swaying.

"When the chandeliers stopped swaying, she told us to get out of the [Palace]. We followed her," said Golez, adding that it was part of "protocol" to leave the building following a quake in anticipation of aftershocks.

Outside, Ms Arroyo engaged the Cabinet officials in small talk.

"This is the reason I want earthquake drills to be held in schools," she was heard saying.

Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, NDCC chair, was among those who advised Ms Arroyo against immediately returning to the Palace. He said it was standard operating procedure for structural engineers to check a building for damage after a quake.

Built in 1802 on the north bank of the Pasig River, Malacañang was originally the summer residence of a Spanish aristocrat. It became the residence of American governors-general and later the official residence of the President of the Philippines, starting with President Manuel L. Quezon.

Golez said that after the quake, it was Glenn Rabonza, OCD chief and NDCC executive director, who got to a phone to call officials at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology to find out what was happening.

The other officials present at the meeting were Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap and Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde.

Back to business

"The President was calm. As if nothing happened, she went back to the usual business of the day and focused on the Cabinet meeting, on governance," Golez said.

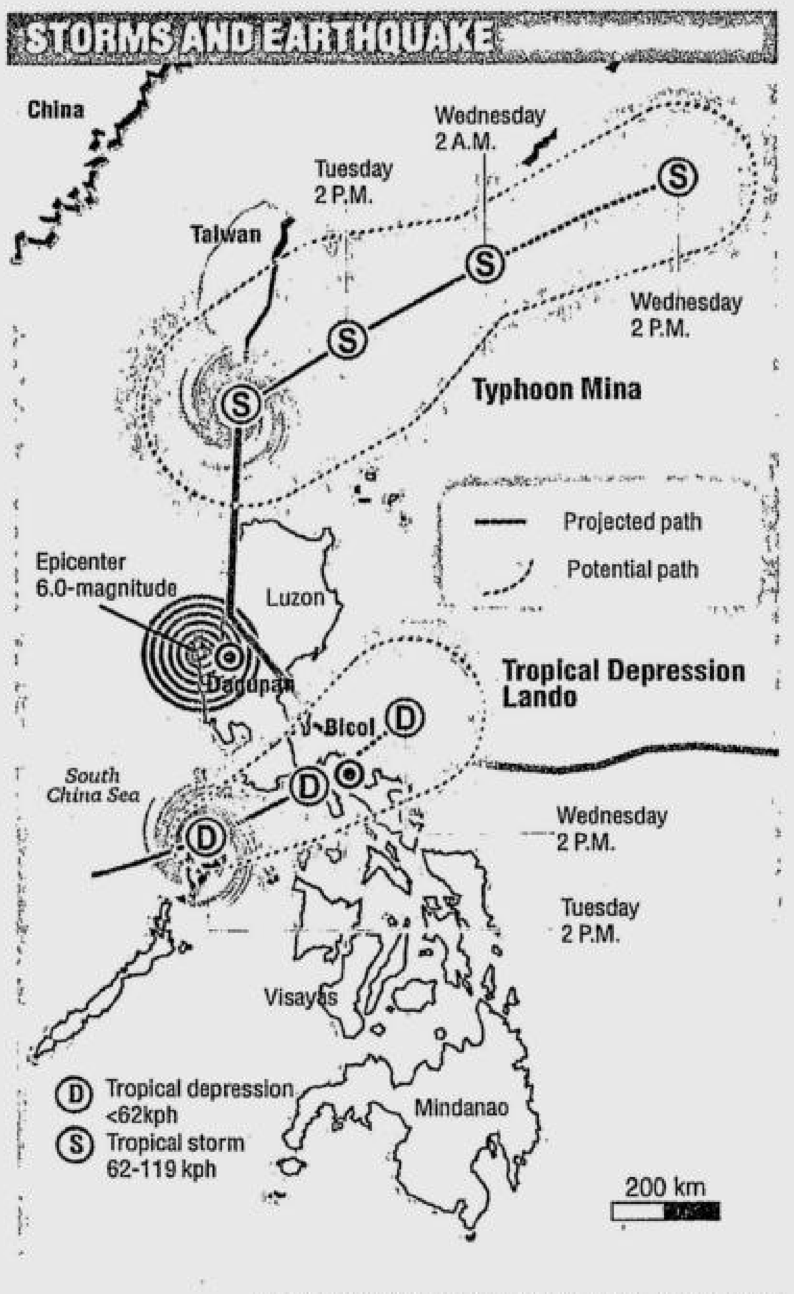
Ms Arroyo ordered the NDCC and all concerned agencies to "continue monitoring and coordinating and to make sure that the [typhoon] evacuees are given services," he said.

According to Golez, the government's focus is now northern Luzon, where Typhoon "Mina" and Tropical Depression "Lando" were expected to converge. But owing to Lando's return, Bicol is not yet out of harm's way, he said.

"The President stressed the importance of damage and needs assessment after the typhoon, so we would know what to rehabilitate," Golez said.

It was later found that the quake had wrought no damage on Malacañang, which has undergone renovation over the years.

Dr. Jane Punongbayan, Phivolcs supervising science research specialist, tracked the quake epicenter at 86 kilometers northwest of Lingayen, Pangasinan.



SOURCES: JOINT TYPHOON WARNING SYSTEM, REUTERS AND USGS, AFP

She said the quake was felt at Intensity 6 in Lingayen; Intensity 5 in Bagac, Bataan; Intensity 4 in Manila and Caloocan; Intensity 3 in Pasig, Makati, Bulacan, Tarlac, Pampanga, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte; and Intensity 2 in Quezon City.

No tsunami alert

Phivolcs said the quake was tectonic in origin and could be traced to the Manila Trench.

Punongbayan was working at the third floor of the Phivolcs building in Diliman, Quezon City, when the floor swayed for a few seconds.

"I had only four hours of sleep, and I thought I was just dizzy," she told reporters. "There was a slight shaking of the floor. After two or three seconds, the floor swayed, and I saw the electric fan moving a bit."

Punongbayan said the temblor was too moderate to trigger a tsunami.

"There was no need to issue a tsunami alert. The coast was clear. There was no reason to worry," she said, pointing out that a magnitude 7 earthquake could trigger a tsunami. "It wasn't that strong to damage buildings."

But it was enough to cause jitters in the metropolis and send some office workers and government employees scurrying out of medium and high-rise buildings.

"Under Intensity 2, you won't feel it if you're moving around. That's how weak it is. But if you were in the upper floors of a building in Makati, you could feel it," Punongbayan said.

A quake of yesterday's magnitude occurs at least once a month in Pangasinan. A swarm of quakes will be felt in the area in the next several days, Punongbayan said.

"This area regularly releases an earthquake of this magnitude, and each time, we feel the tremors here in Metro Manila," she said.

Magnitude refers to the energy of the earthquake, while intensity is the shaking felt or observed by the public, according to Phivolcs.

Enrile's focus

The quake failed to disrupt Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's concentration on the 2008 national budget deliberations.

Enrile, the Senate finance committee chair who has the task to defend the chamber's version of the budget, and Sen. Edgardo Angara had been debating for about two hours in the Senate session hall when the building swayed.

"I think there's an earthquake," Angara said off-microphone after finishing his statement.

Enrile stopped for a moment, swaying, then went on to answer Angara's question.

The two continued their discussion—at the time of the quake they were engrossed in the development of provinces—for the next half-hour as if nothing had happened.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, the acting presiding officer, also stayed in his seat.

None of the staff and members of the gallery, including Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, left their seats.

"I didn't notice it," Enrile later said, adding he was focused on the discussion.

In another room in the building, where the bicameral Commission on Appointments committee on defense was holding a hearing, the quake struck at an ominous moment.

Brig. Gen. Nestor Sadiarin, head of the Armed Forces' Civil Relations Service, was being grilled by four senators for the survey he ordered among military officers in June regarding their perception of rebel officer and then newly elected Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Sadiarin had his promotion to one-star rank in peril after withholding a copy of the AFP-wide survey requested by Sen. Jamby Madrigal, and refusing to say who had cleared its conduct.

Just as Sadiarin was insisting that he himself had ordered the survey, the quake struck.

Some of the people present, including some of the legislators, rose as the room swayed. But no one left.

"This is an omen from God," Madrigal said, adding that Sadiarin was telling "earth-shaking lies."

Later, the 11-member CA defense committee unanimously rejected Sadiarin's confirmation as brigadier general. Senators said the committee's rejection would be carried by the CA plenary body.

This means Sadiarin has to be re-nominated by Ms Arroyo.

No classes

Elsewhere, schoolchildren who had just returned to classes from a Monday break brought about by Mina enjoyed another break when officials in Baguio and Dagupan cities suspended classes because of the quake.

Students in Baguio's public and private elementary schools were ushered by their teachers to open grounds as the quake struck.

These students were not yet born when the city was devastated by a quake on July 16, 1990. Teachers and parents said none of them panicked when the buildings shook. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño in Manila; Elmer Kristian Dauigoy, Gabriel Cardinoza and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Storms weaken; heavy rains forecast today until Thursday

From page A1

A low pressure area is also forecast to enter the Philippine area of responsibility today, but it will not hit the archipelago, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Signal No. 1 was raised over Metro Manila, most parts of southern Tagalog and some parts of Bicol in view of Lando's return.

Heavy rains today

"We should expect heavy rains until today in Metro Manila," Pagasa weather forecaster Rene Paciente said last night.

Pagasa also raised Signal No. 1 over northern Palawan, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Romblon, Marinduque, Batangas, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Batangas, Bulacan, Quezon, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Albay, Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Masbate, Aklan, Capiz, Antique, Iloilo and northern Samar.

At 4 p.m., Lando was sighted off the coast of Occidental Mindoro, packing maximum winds of 55 kph.

Moving east northeast at 26 kph, the depression was forecast to make landfall in southern Mindoro last night, and sweep over Albay and then Catanduanes toward the Philippine Sea, according to Paciente.

After hitting land mass, Lando is expected to dissipate prior to its exit on Thursday.

'No more effect'

Less than 48 hours after smashing into Isabela, Mina weakened as it swept over Basco, Batanes, toward southern Japan.

"It has no more effect. Within the next few hours, we expect it to be out of the country," senior weather specialist Robert Sawi said.

Signal No. 2 was raised over Batanes, and Signal No. 1 over Babuyan group of islands.

There's still a chance a low pressure area could enter the Philippine area of responsibility today, but it would not hit land, according to Sawi.

At least one or two more storms are expected next month.

GMA's praise

Lando left 14 people dead when it first struck the Visayas last week, while Mina killed 12 in a swing through the Bicol region and northern Luzon after Lando blew off toward Vietnam.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the time and effort which government and local officials as well as the private sector gave in the face of threats from the storms was the "kind of heroism" the country needed from time to time.

"We praise the soldiers, policemen, doctors, local officials, and other government personnel and private organizations for their greatness," Ms Arroyo said during a meeting of relief agencies.

Damage to crops

Four persons, including a 6-year-old boy, were reported killed in the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR) in the wake of Mina, bringing to 12 the official death count of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC).

As of yesterday, more than 200,000 people in Regions 1, 2, 3, 4a, 5, 8, and the Cordillera were still housed in 668 evacuation centers, the NDCC said.

It said 6-year-old Jimmy Cadamos Soriano and Lawagan Baggay, 69, were both buried in a landslide in Pinukpuk town in Kalinga.

Another victim, Felipe Abawag, 65, had drowned in Conner, Apayao.

The fourth fatality, 78-year-old Santos Sabedra, also drowned in Conner.

At least two fishermen were missing in Solana, Cagayan. They were last seen crossing a river in the town.

Mina destroyed at least P72 million worth of crops in the provinces of Isabela, Cagayan and Ilocos Norte, officials and relief agencies said.

In Isabela, provincial agriculturist Danilo Tumamao said the typhoon damaged P9.65 million worth of palay and corn. A total of 148 villages in the province were flooded.

Dinapigue Mayor Renato Candido said the route from his town to Aurora had been blocked by landslides.

Challenge to farmers

In Cagayan, P42 million worth of palay and corn was destroyed.

"This is a challenge for us to recover. Our farm production target has been affected and we have to restart," Gov. Alvaro Antonio said.

In Ilocos Norte, the Patapat Bridge was partially opened to motorists after some of the debris from Monday's landslide were cleared.

Officials said it would take a week to complete clearing operation on the bridge.

At least P21 million worth of palay and corn was destroyed in Ilocos Norte, mostly in the towns of Bacarra and Sarrat.

A total of 100,588 families, or 443,105 people, in 121 municipalities were affected by Mina.

A 5 p.m. report from the Office of Civil Defense in Bicol said there were still 9,865 families, or a total of 46,308 people, in evacuation centers in the region.

Thanks to Pagasa advisories

Albay Gov. Joey Salceda said Albayanos were thankful to Vic Manalo, a senior meteorological officer of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), for his advisories on the typhoon.

Salceda said that upon the advice of Manalo, no preemptive evacuation was needed despite the reentry of Lando.

But residents along western coastal areas have been advised to stay alert for storm surges while those in low-lying areas should watch out for floods.

Those in lahar-prone areas should watch out for mudflows while those in mountain slopes should be alert for landslides. *With reports from Nikko Dizon and Christine O. Avendaño in Manila, Villamor Visaya Jr., Estanislao Caldez and Cristina Arzadon, Inquirer Northern Luzon, and Joanna Los Baños, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Please don't eat the shoes; man jailed for 'Jolilbee'

From page A1

came—Jolilbee shoes?

Not so fast.

A man who put a mark and logo similar to that of the popular fast-food chain on his footwear products is facing the maximum prison time of five years for violating the Intellectual Property Code.

The Court of Appeals has affirmed the 2004 decision of the Manila Regional Trial Court convicting Richard Chua, fining him P100,000 and ordering the destruction of more than 2,000 pairs of shoes with the contested logo and mark.

The appellate court also modified the RTC ruling, saying Chua should be jailed a minimum of two years to a maximum of five years. The RTC had sentenced him to only two years.

Chua had contested the RTC ruling, saying Jollibee Foods Corp. which owns the mark and logo, was in the food business while he was in the business of selling shoes. Hence, there could be no competition between the two.

Similar marks, logo

In its Nov. 19 ruling, the appellate court said the "Jolilbee" mark on the shoes and slippers sold by Chua was almost identical to the "Jollibee" of the popular fast-food chain. The logo of a bee's head found on Chua's footwear "practically duplicated" the one used by Jollibee.

The close similarities between the mark and the logo on Chua's footwear and the ones used by Jollibee, might confuse the buying public, it added.

"Looking at the marks used by appellant on its shoes and slippers, the likelihood that the purchasing public would be deceived or mistaken is very much a possibility. The similarity between the two marks are so pronounced, that the inevitable conclusion is that the registered marks were used deliberately to deceive and to capitalize on Jollibee Foods Corp.'s reputation and goodwill," the court said in its decision.

Exclusive use

The fast-food chain also had exclusive use of the mark and logo and did not authorize Chua to use it.

"As the owner of a registered trademark, Jollibee Foods Corp. has every right to the exclusive use of the said mark and protect the goodwill it has amassed over the years," the court said.

Using the dominancy test where focus is given to the similarity of the trademarks, the court said the font type and size on Chua's footwear were the same ones used by Jollibee.

The slight difference in the spelling was "miniscule," so anyone looking at the footwear's mark could not easily tell the difference between Chua's company and the fast-food chain.

"Also, when the two marks are pronounced, they sound confusingly similar," it said.

Well-known trademark

The fact that the Jollibee trademark is well-known also worked against Chua. The appellate court said that although Chua did not use the mark and logo on food items that could compete with Jollibee products, he was still liable for violating the Intellectual Property Code.

"As the registered trademarks of Jollibee Foods Corp. are well-known marks, a fact that was not even disputed by appellant, the appellant's act of using an identical translation of the registered trademark encroached on Jollibee Foods Corp.'s right to exclusively use the same," it said.

"By so doing, appellant created a situation wherein the buying public would be led to believe that the shoes and slippers bearing the similar mark is actually a product of Jollibee Foods Corp. to its detriment as it has no way of monitoring the quality of the goods offered for sale by appellant," the court said.

Old case

In 1999, Jollibee Foods Corp. ordered the investigation of the unauthorized use of its registered trademarks and discovered several establishments in Pasig City selling slippers and shoes with the Jollibee mark.

The supplier was traced to a store in Binondo, Manila, owned by Chua.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) later searched Chua's store and seized more than 2,000 pairs of footwear.

Charges were later filed against Chua and another man identified as Raymundo Sabio, who remains at large.

UN: AFP behind killings; rejects gov't claim of Red purge

From page A1

country's political discourse."

Alston visited the Philippines in February and issued a preliminary report in which he said the military was in a state of denial about its role in the deaths of about 800 activists and journalists over the past six years.

In his final report, Alston dismissed theories that the killings were carried out by communist groups to weed out spies and discredit the government.

While acknowledging that the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, "does commit extrajudicial executions, sometimes dressing them up as 'revolutionary justice,'" Alston pointed out that "the evidence that [the NPA] is currently engaged in a large-scale purge is strikingly unconvincing."

He added: "The military's insistence that the 'purge theory' is correct can only be viewed as a cynical attempt to displace responsibility."

Impunity

Alston also said "impunity" had made the executions of journalists and leftist activists possible.

He observed that "no one has been convicted in the cases involving leftist activists, and only six cases involving journalists have resulted in convictions."

He also said "the priorities of the criminal justice system had been "distorted," and had "increasingly focused on prosecuting civil society leaders rather than their killers."

Alston said the measures instituted by the government to address the problem—such as the formation of special courts to try cases involving extrajudicial killings, as well as the Melo Commission and the Philippine National Police's Task Force Usig to conduct specific investigations—were "encouraging."

"However," he said, "they have yet to succeed, and the extrajudicial executions continue."

Alston said no one he spoke with in the course of his investigation had questioned the PNP's duty and authority to look into crimes allegedly committed by the military.

"However, in practice, it does so only in a perfunctory manner," he said, adding:

"Plausible explanations for this reticence include fear, a tacit understanding that crimes by the [Armed Forces of the Philippines] should not be investigated, the personal bonds felt among senior AFP and PNP officers, and the solidarity fostered by current cooperation in counterinsurgency operations."

No policy 'like that'

Malacañang countered the news of the Alston report with its official line that the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo did not tolerate extrajudicial killings.

"We don't have a policy like that," Lorelie Fajardo, the deputy spokesperson of the President, said on the phone.

"The President will not tolerate this kind of killings," she said. "Of course, the President values human rights."

Fajardo said Ms Arroyo had early on instructed Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita to be "on top of all of these," meaning all cases involving political and other unexplained killings.

Ermita, who faced the UN General Assembly late last month on Ms Arroyo's behest to defend the country's human rights record, earlier said that the "country has nothing to hide."

He said human rights violation was "not an official policy" of the Arroyo administration, and that the Philippines was one of only five countries in the world which had "enshrined" the creation of a human rights commission in their Constitutions.

Fajardo said the Palace could not as yet answer Alston's report point by point: "We are still verifying the report. Is it a new one, or the previous report?"

But "off-hand," she said, "there are now pending cases regarding this."

"The stand of the [AFP] as a whole is that if they know that there are personnel or any officials involved in such killings, they refer them to court or file appropriate cases," she said.

According to Fajardo, there are six pending cases in civilian and military courts involving 13 military personnel.

She said that last month, Ermita made public the steps taken by Ms Arroyo in response to Alston's earlier report to the United Nations.

"Precisely, we are acting on the recommendations already," she said.

In the courts

In a text message, Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, spokesperson of the PNP, said that according to its own findings, "as supported by evidence, some of the killings had been attributed to military personnel, some to PNP personnel, some to the CPP-NPA, and some are not connected at all with these groups."

Pagdilao said the cases resulting from PNP investigations had been lodged in various courts. He said warrants of arrest had been issued, "signifying that the courts acknowledge the existence of probable cause and that the evidence of guilt is strong against those charged by the PNP."

It's his opinion

"We respect Alston's findings as his opinion, but whether or not these are supported by evidence that can stand judicial scrutiny in any court of law, domestic or foreign, is another matter," Pagdilao said.

"If [Alston] has evidence to help the PNP in its quest for justice, we ask him to provide us. In this way, he can truly be an instrument of justice," the officer said.

The military's Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said that while he had yet to read the Alston report, the killing of leftist leaders was "not the policy of the AFP."

According to the text message Bacarro sent to reporters, the AFP "recognizes and respects" human rights accorded to people in a democracy.

Critics' rights also respected

"The AFP, as an organization, will not trample on the rights of others, including those who are critical of the AFP or of the government," said Bacarro, the chief of the military's Public Information Office.

He stressed that "in the pursuit of justice," the military had been transparent and cooperative with any investigation body.

"Individuals belonging to the [AFP] who are suspected of having perpetrated human rights violations are made available to any investigation," Bacarro said. *Reports from AP, Michael Lim Ubac, Alcuin Papa and Nikko Dizon*

Gov't accused of hindering further rights probes

By Jerome Aning

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION has been hindering further international scrutiny of extrajudicial killings and abductions of leftist activists in the Philippines, according to militant groups engaged in talks in Geneva with United Nations human rights officials.

Leaders of the peasant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and the human rights advocate Karapatan, together with relatives of *desaparecidos* (the disappeared), held a dialogue early this week with members of the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance.

They urged the working group members to come to the Philippines and look into the increased disappearances under President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration.

But the working group, according to KMP and Karapatan's joint press statement from Geneva, said that along with other UN bodies and special rapporteurs, its request for letters of invitation to come to the Philippines had been ignored by the government.

"By not answering their request, the Arroyo regime is creating an impression on the rapporteurs that it is hiding something," KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said.

The UN working group, chaired by Mexican human rights lawyer Santiago Corcuera, told Ramos and Karapatan secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez that its letter sent in March 2006 had yet to be answered.

Ramos and Enriquez said they had learned from the working group that three other UN special rapporteurs who wrote similar requests had also been ignored.

They were Martin Scheinin, special rapporteur for protecting human rights while countering terrorism; Jean Ziegler, for food, and Hina Jilani, for human rights defenders.

Special rapporteurs are experts appointed by the UN secretary general to conduct fact-finding missions to investigate and monitor allegations of human rights violations and recommend solutions. They may only visit countries that had agreed to invite them. *Jerome Aning*

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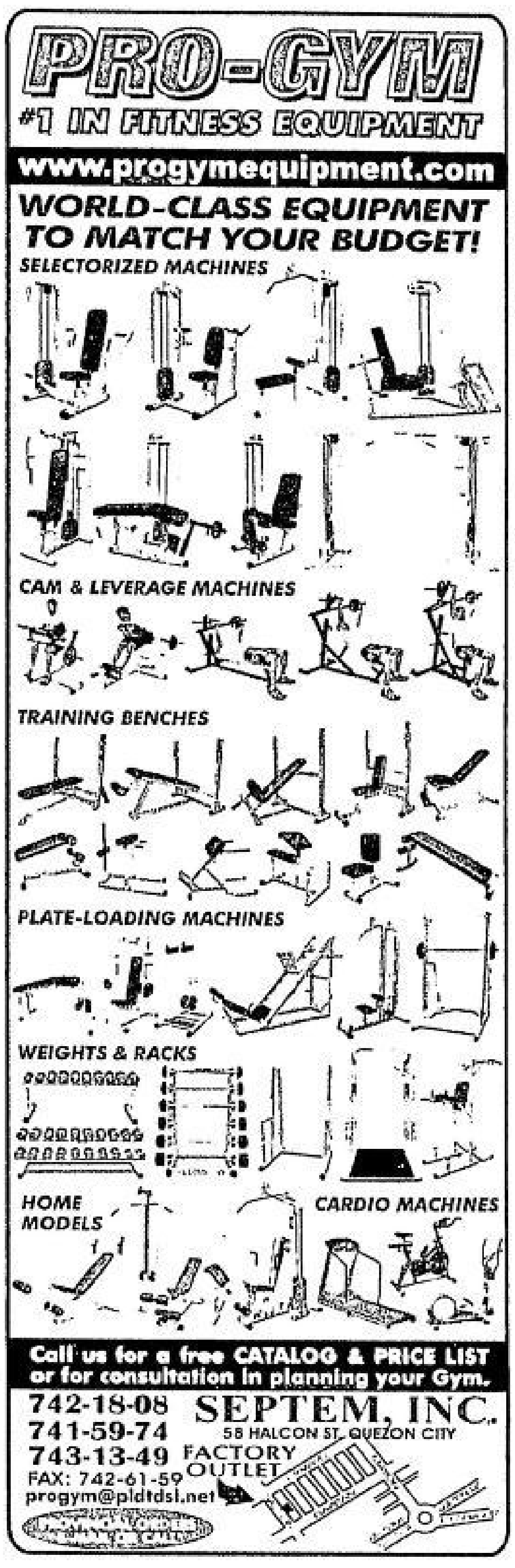

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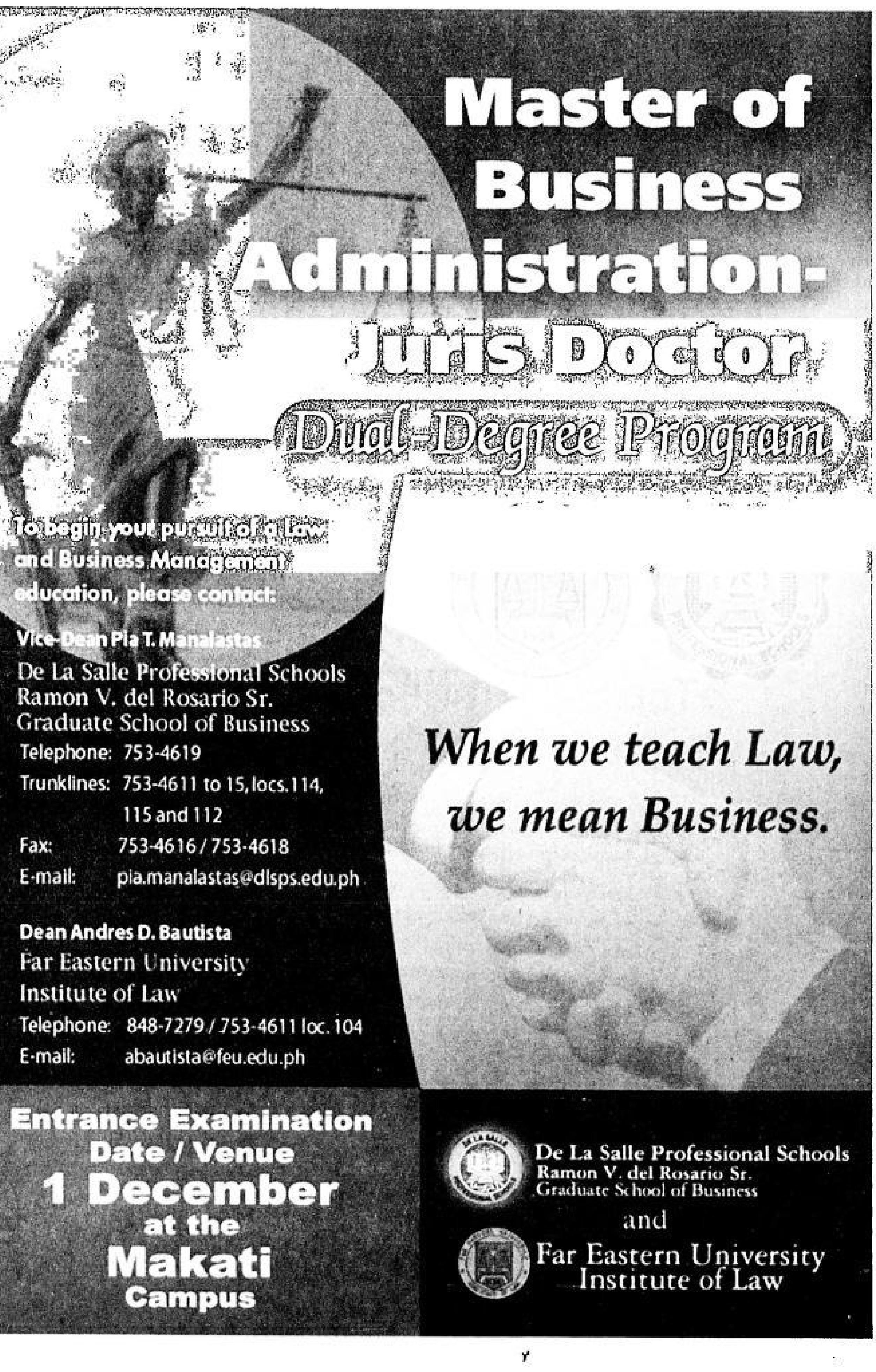

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More Sports on A31-A36

Phone Pals swap Taulava for Peek

STANDINGS	W	L
Purefoods	9	1
Red Bull	6	3
Alaska	5	4
Magnolia	5	4
Talk 'N Text	5	5
Air21	4	4
Sta. Lucia	4	5
Ginebra	3	6
Welcoat	3	6
Coca-Cola	1	7

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Alaska vs Coca-Cola
7:20 p.m.—Welcoat vs Barangay Ginebra

By June Navarro

AFTER FAILING TO LIFT POWERHOUSE Talk 'N Text to the top, Asi Taulava now faces the more daunting task of helping boost Coca-Cola out of the cellar in the Smart PBA Philippine Cup.

The 6-foot-9 Taulava will suit up for the Tigers when they meet the Alaska Aces at 4:35 p.m. today hoping to snap out of a horrendous seven-game skid and rebuild the image of the franchise.

TAULAVA

PEEK

With still a year left on his two-year, P8.4-million contract, Taulava, once the pride and joy of Talk 'N Text, was shipped to Coca-Cola in exchange for the brawny Ali Peek and the Tigers' first-round draft pick next season.

"It was a difficult trade," said Talk 'N Text governor Ricky Vargas. "The franchise fought side by side with Asi during the most trying times."

"Asi was always Talk 'N Text but we had to do it for a bigger purpose. I will personally miss him and he will always be a friend," said Vargas, whose Phone Pals are running fifth with a 5-5 card despite an elegant lineup headed by Taulava.

Barangay Ginebra and Welcoat, both at 3-6 and just a notch above Coca-Cola, tangle in the mainer at 7:20 p.m.

"We're very excited with Asi," said Coca-Cola coach Binky Favis, whose Tigers are in the bottom of the standings at 1-7. "Hopefully, it (trade) could change the complexion of how the team plays."

With the sudden swap, the Aces face new problems as far as frontline matchup is concerned.

"Our job just got more difficult," said Alaska coach Tim Cone, whose Aces finished the first round at 5-4 along with the Magnolia Beverage Masters.

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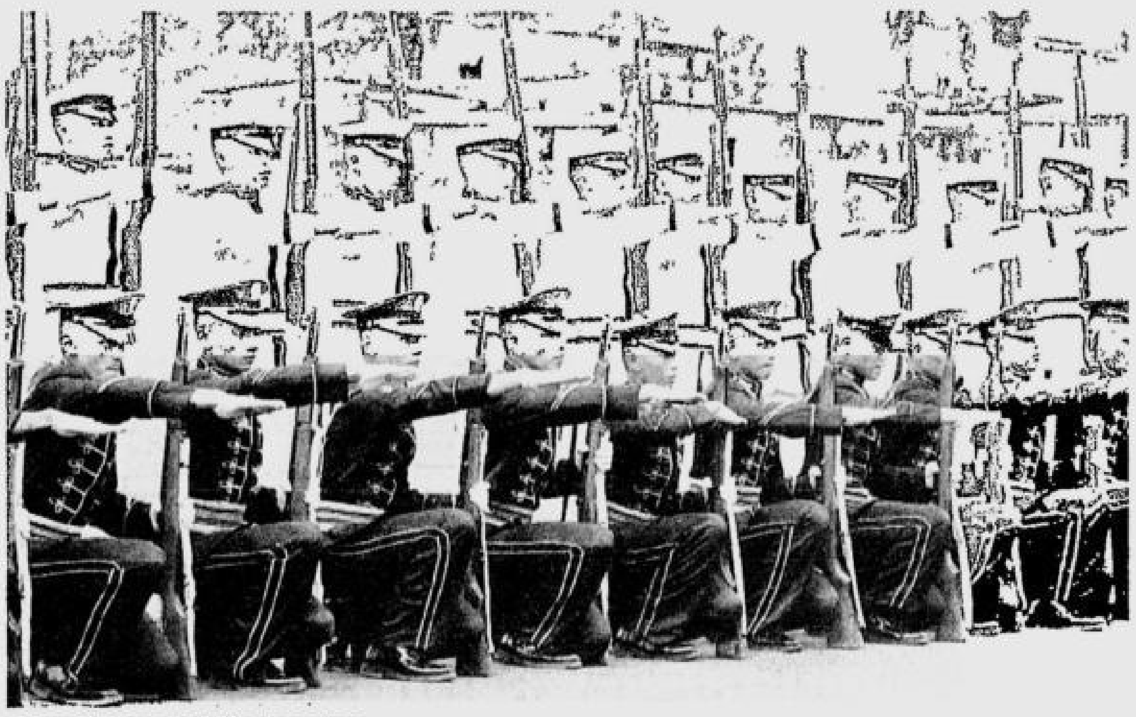
Basilan mayor included in murder raps

Joins 3 other suspects in Batasan blast amended charge sheet



SHOWING THEIR MOVES
Members of the Philippine National Police Academy's Class Matikas show fine form at a drill demonstration during a program marking the 68th anniversary of the Quezon City Police District in Camp Karingal, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

By Alcuin Papa

THE POLICE HAVE FILED MURDER AND FRUSTRATED murder charges against Tuburan, Basilan Mayor Hajarun Jamiri for his alleged involvement in the Nov. 13 bombing of the Batasan complex which killed Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar and three others.

Philippine National Police chief Director General Avelino Razon yesterday said they amended the charge sheet to include Jamiri's name.

Initially charged at the Department of Justice were three suspects—Ikram Indama, Adhan Kusain and Caidar Aunal.

According to the police, Kusain owned the motorcycle used to deliver the bomb to the Batasan complex while Indama parked the vehicle near the entrance of the South Wing.

"We already charged the three … now Jamiri is included (in the charge sheet). Jamiri was one of the John Does and we already made the amendment to the complaint," Razon said.

Kusain, Aunal and Indama were arrested in a raid conducted by the police on a house in Violago Village, Payatas, Quezon City last Nov. 15. Abu Jandal, a suspected member of the Abu Sayyaf, and two others identified as Redwan Indama and his wife, Saing, were killed in a shootout with the raiding team.

Police recovered additional evidence to link the arrested suspects to the bombing, including a Congress special plate; the deed of sale of the motorcycle; nine cellular phones, a shirt and a jacket bearing the logo of the House of Representatives; several identification cards and ATM cards, photos and notebooks and the calling cards of former Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin.

On the other hand, Jamiri was arrested a few days after the Payatas raid in Malate, Manila. Also arrested at that time was Jamiri's aide, Halik Usman, who was released later. Jamiri led the police to another motorcycle and a bomb, reportedly set to be used as a "backup bomb" in the plot to kill Akbar.

However, Razon said Salapuddin has yet to be considered a suspect since there is no evidence linking him to the bombing. He added that investigators have a list of possible masterminds but declined to identify them.

"We are proceeding with our efforts to find out who ordered the bombing and who is the mastermind, looking not only for circumstantial evidence and testimonial evidence but strong evidence to make our case solid," Razon said.

Suspect in slay of 4 family members nabbed in Quezon City

By Jeannette I. Andrade

AN ARGUMENT OVER AN ICE cream scooper was what allegedly drove a 45-year-old vendor to hack to death his mother-in-law, his pregnant wife and his two children inside their house in Cavite province Sunday night.

Cecilio Mangalino, a resident of Tanza, Cavite, was arrested Monday night in Tandang Sora, Quezon City by a joint team of the QC Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit and the Regional Special Action Unit.

The ice cream vendor told the INQUIRER that he never intended to hurt his three daughters, saying that, "they just got in the way."

Mangalino, his eyes bloodshot and remorse etched on his face, spoke softly when asked why he attacked his daughters, aged 12, 9 and 3.

"You know how children are. They saw me attacking their mother and their grandmother with the pick axe and they tried to stop me. I was drunk. It was an accident that they got hit," he said, his voice slightly cracking.

His youngest daughter is still undergoing treatment at the General Emilio Aguinaldo Hospital in Cavite for hack wounds in the head.

According to the suspect, he killed his wife, Florenda, 37, who was one-month pregnant, because of the insults she hurled at him after he failed to buy an ice cream scooper.

He added that he also killed his mother-in-law, Luz Madriaga, 75, because she had been critical of him since he married Florenda 16 years ago.

"I had consumed two bottles of gin. When my wife and my mother-in-law saw me enter our house, they started to nag me. I saw a pick axe, picked it up and hacked them with it," Mangalino said. After realizing what he did, the suspect said he hid in a relative's house in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

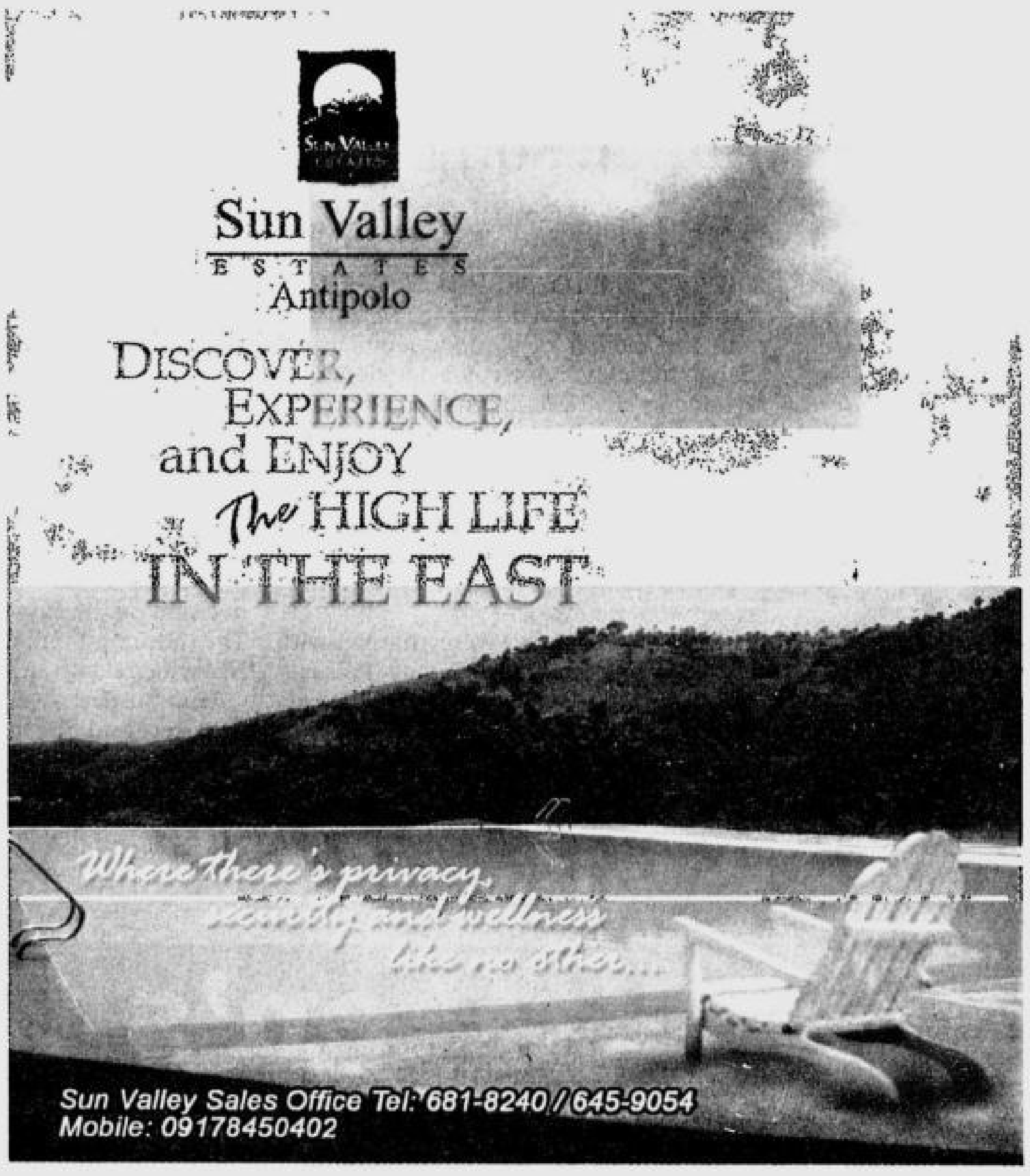
Police officers, however, tracked him down with the help of an informant.

Mangalino surrendered peacefully and was later turned over to the custody of the Cavite police.

DID YOU KNOW

THE FIRST Pope to visit the Philippines was almost assassinated upon his arrival at the then Manila International Airport. Pope Paul VI was attacked by Bolivian Benjamin Mendoza with a 10-inch *kris* on Nov. 27, 1970. The Vatican statement on the murder try suggested that a Korean cardinal had thwarted the attack. Mendoza was restrained by security personnel and was later charged with frustrated murder.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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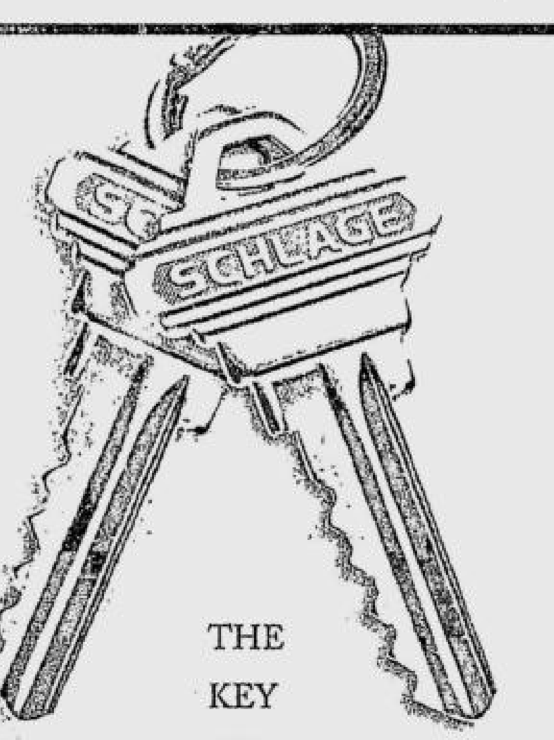

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Singapore Airlines was recognized by Skytrax as having the Best Business Class and was named the Airline of the Year for 2007.

Child abuse, illegal detention charges dropped vs Ducat

By Allison W. Lopez

THE MANILA CITY PROSECUTOR'S Office yesterday dismissed the child abuse and serious illegal detention charges filed by the social welfare department against hostage takers Armando "Jun" Ducat and Caezar Augustus Carbonell to "prevent duplicity of offenses."

In a 13-page joint resolution, Assistant City Prosecutor Lea Llavore said the two could not be charged with violating Republic Act No. 7610 or the Child Abuse Law because they were already facing a similar case in the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 6.

"We are happy in a way because we can use this resolution in the serious illegal detention case that remained," the pair's lawyer, William de los Santos, told the INQUIRER.

Last March 28, Ducat, the owner of Musmos Daycare Center in Tondo, and Carbonell held hostage for nearly 10 hours 26 children and two teachers on a bus parked in front of the Bonifacio Shrine near the Manila City Hall. During the standoff, Ducat, who was armed with two firearms and two grenades, denounced corruption and demanded better lives for the children. He later agreed to release the children and to give himself up.

The police later sued him and Carbonell for violation of Article 267 of the Revised Penal Code (serious illegal detention) and RA 962 or illegal possession of firearms. The two are detained at the Manila City Jail.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development, however, also charged the suspects with child abuse and serious illegal detention because they allegedly "endangered the lives of the children" and "abused their confidence when he (Ducat) misled them into believing that they were going to Tagaytay" on a field trip.

Representing the DSWD were Manila's Social Welfare Secretary Celerina Sangil and DSWD officers Digna Punay, Herminia Salonga, Rosalina de Leon and Marissa Torralba.

Llavore found no probable cause to indict Ducat and Carbonell for violation of RA 7610, particularly Article VI, Section 10 (a), because the provision expressly stated that "it shall only be applied when the acts of child abuse, cruelty, exploitation or exposing the child to conditions prejudicial to his development are not covered by the Revised Penal Code."

Citing a Supreme Court decision, the prosecutor said the acts constituting the offense of RA 7610—such as the 10-hour detention of the children and display of firearms—"all formed part of the crime of serious illegal detention and are incidental thereto."

Since Ducat and Carbonell already have a pending case for serious illegal detention at the Manila RTC that stemmed from the same incident, Llavore said "they could no longer be prosecuted for violation of RA 7610."

The DSWD had claimed they have the legal personality to sue those who violated RA 7610 and that intervention was necessary since the children's parents deliberately failed to exercise their parental authority.

Ducat and Carbonell, meanwhile, countered that the DSWD had no right to complain because it was not the offended party and that the children were under the full supervision of their parents, none of whom filed complaints against them.

The prosecutor, however, only focused on the duplicity of charges because it was "moot and academic" to decide on the merits of both parties' arguments, Santos said.

GIVE ME SPACE! REM ZAMORA
A group of vendors on Rizal Avenue in Sta. Cruz, Manila, figures in a scuffle after an argument over space for their wares. Policemen in the area had to step in to break up the fight.

METROBRIEFS

Woman shot dead in Quezon City

A 48-YEAR-OLD woman was shot dead yesterday afternoon inside her house in Quezon City, allegedly after she caused the arrest of a drug offender. Lolita Briones, of Freedom Park 5 in Barangay Batasan Hills, was killed instantly after the still unidentified suspect, who was armed with an improvised shotgun, shot her at close range. PO2 Joselito Gagaza of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU) said the incident happened at around 12:30 p.m. yesterday while Briones was playing pool (a local version of billiards using chips instead of balls) with some friends in her house. Gagaza said that the suspect approached the victim, shot her and then fled. Briones, the QCPD-CIDU investigator said, had been at odds with one of her neighbors whose alleged illegal drug activities she had tipped off to the police. The information later led to the suspected drug offender's arrest. Gagaza did not identify Briones' neighbor to avoid jeopardizing follow-up operations.

Jeannette I. Andrade

'Loveknots' Book I now off the press

"LOVEKNOTS Book 1: Mukhang Baby … Pag Tulog," a compilation of the INQUIRER comic strip Loveknots by Elizabeth T. Chionglo, is now out. Loveknots, which first appeared in 1988, features humorous takes on life, love, politics, religion and the relationship of a married couple, Jowa and Jaja, and how they interact with their friends, neighbors and relatives. It received the Best Comic Strip award from the Catholic Mass Media Awards in 2005. The comic book is sold at Centralbooks, Phoenix Building, Quezon Avenue in Quezon City and in its branches in Ever Gotesco, Manila Plaza Mall, Recto Avenue, Glorietta 3 Mall, and SM Megamall. It is also available in Merriam Webster Bookstores on Arnaiz Avenue corner Pasong Tamo in Makati and on Carvajal Street in Binondo, Manila.

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You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Pulik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 p.m. of **December 4, 2007** and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on **December 13, 2007**.

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of **December 13, 2007**. Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

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General Manager

(PDI - Nov. 27 & 28, 2007)

Software now on list of antipiracy team

By Julie M. Aurelio

NOW EVEN ANTISOFTWARE piracy officials are declaring "an all out war" against manufacturers of fake computer software.

"We are pursuing an all out war against all forms of software piracy. We urge businesses to be more conscientious in using software to avoid undesirable consequences," said lawyer Elfren Meneses of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Meneses, the head of the Intellectual Property Rights Division, spoke at a press conference of the Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team in Pasay City yesterday.

He said the PAPT had seized 206 computers with unlicensed software, 22 pirated installers, and 15 sacks of pirated software CDs for the month of November alone.

The PAPT is a composite group made up of representatives from the Philippine National Police, the NBI and the Optical Media Board.

The seized merchandise from Internet cafes and stores in Metro Manila amounted to P14.3 million, he added.

Operations

The PAPT conducted 12 successful operations this November against different business establishments which are engaged in using and selling pirated or unlicensed copies of computer software.

"We want to send a clear message that we are taking severe measures against the proliferation of software piracy and no one is spared from this campaign," added Rosendo Meneses, executive director of the Optical Media Board.

Meneses said the PAPT has already conducted spot-checks on the fake merchandise in several offices in Makati City, call centers in Mandaluyong City, computer stores in Quezon City and schools in Las Piñas City.

Part of their campaign was to visit key cities in Metro Manila and distribute flyers and leaflets on the country's laws on intellectual property rights.

Software piracy is a violation of the Intellectual Property Code and is punishable by up to nine years imprisonment and a fine of up to P1.5 million.

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Father, son face extortion, graft raps

By Tina G. Santos

A COURT EMPLOYEE AND HIS FATHER who allegedly tried to extort P2 million from the mother of a rape victim in exchange for a favorable court decision were arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation on Monday.

Arrested in an entrapment operation were Ronaldo Awid, 35, a sheriff of the Mandaluyong Metropolitan Trial Court and reportedly the son-in-law of a Quezon City Regional Trial Court judge, and his father, lawyer Roberto Awid.

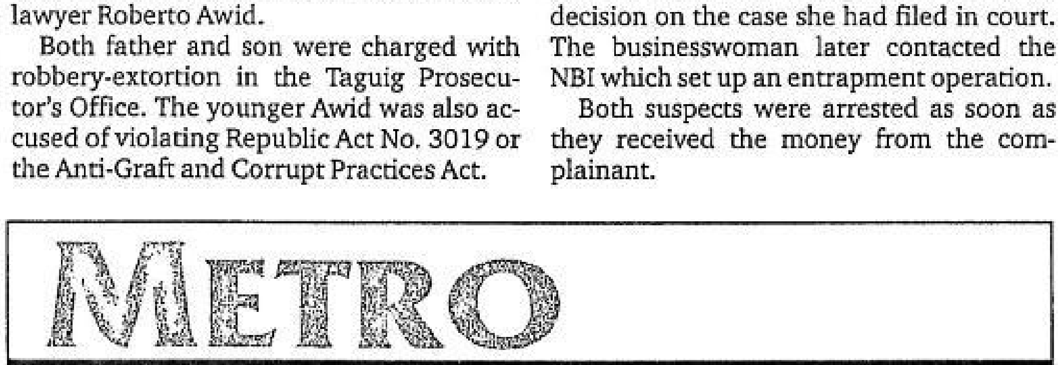
Both father and son were charged with robbery-extortion in the Taguig Prosecutor's Office. The younger Awid was also accused of violating Republic Act No. 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

The NBI, however, could not say if the QCRTC judge knew of the suspects' alleged extortion attempt.

An investigation showed that the complainant, a businesswoman, had filed a case against her husband whom she accused of raping their daughter. When the judge granted the rape suspect's petition for bail, the complainant filed a motion for reconsideration.

At this point, the suspects, according to the NBI, called her up and allegedly asked for P2 million in exchange for a favorable decision on the case she had filed in court. The businesswoman later contacted the NBI which set up an entrapment operation.

Both suspects were arrested as soon as they received the money from the complainant.



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INQUIRER

Old dikes in Navotas, Malabon give way

By Nancy C. Carvajal

RESIDENTS IN SOME PARTS OF Malabon and Navotas cities were roused from sleep on Monday night by rising floodwaters, reportedly caused by the collapse of old dikes.

According to Ruth Senaida of the Malabon City Engineering Office, the high tide lead to the collapse of several dikes surrounding the Malabon-Navotas River.

The dikes, she said, are part of the mega dike project still under construction by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The P5-billion Camanava flood control project, scheduled for completion last June, is being touted as the solution to the perennial flooding problem in the cities of Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela. The DPWH said the project would be completed in September 2008.

"Water breached the river dike due to high tide and flooded several areas, even places that were not flood-prone," Senaida said.

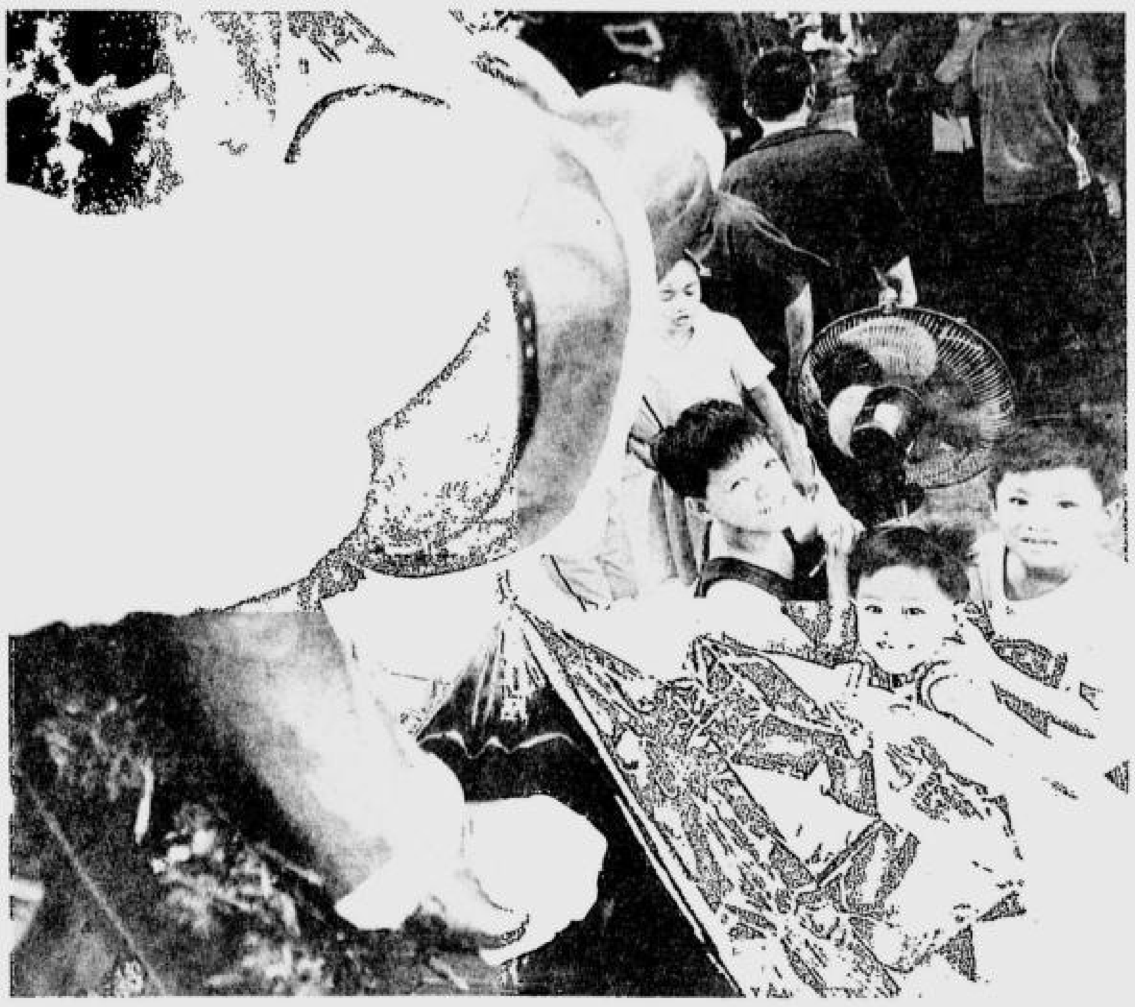
Some residents, she said, suffered slight injuries after they panicked when they saw water entering their homes, but no one was reported killed.

At least nine barangays in Malabon were affected by the sudden rise of water.

The affected barangays were Catmon, Dampalit, Hulongduhat, Ibaba, Longos, Panghulo, San Agustin, Tañong and Tonsuya.

Tañong Barangay Chair Reynaldo Alejandro said that while the city was prone to flooding, Monday's water level, was "unusually high."

Peewee denies meddling in Pasay SK polls



SANTA'S SHOW
Children are fascinated by a tree decorated with Santa Claus figurines at the Padre Gomez Elementary School in Sta. Cruz, Manila. LYN RILLON

By Julie M. Aurelio

PASAY MAYOR WENCESLAO "Peewee" Trinidad yesterday denied allegations that he had manipulated the election of the city's Sangguniang Kabataan Federation officers to ensure his son's victory.

Trinidad said it was not he but the elected SK chairs who had called for a general assembly and the election of federation officials last Nov. 11.

"It's their election; they have the right to self determination," Trinidad said in a phone interview.

Last week, elected SK chairs led by Denise Erika Pesebre of Barangay 195, Raphael Erena of Barangay 108 and Kriezel Ramos of Barangay 189 asked a Pasay City court to declare "null and void" the results of the SK Federation elections.

They also accused Trinidad of manipulating the results in favor of his son Jon in a 25-page petition filed in the sala of Judge Edwin Ramizo of Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 114.

The SK chairs pointed out that since they have yet to assume office on Nov. 30, they have no legal capacity to elect or be elected officers of the city's SK Federation. Named as respondents in the complaint were Jon Trinidad, the mayor's son who was elected president of the federation, and six other SK chairs elected to other posts.

They also asked the court to stop the younger Trinidad and the other officers from assuming office.

The mayor, however, pointed out that the SK Federation elections, though unsupervised by a representative of the Department of Interior and Local Government, was conducted with the guidance of local Commission on Elections officer Anthonette Soriano.

"The children decided to go ahead with their election of officers on Nov. 11 after their oathtaking. I stepped out of the room at that time to let them conduct the elections," he added.

The mayor's wife, Nelfa, also brushed aside claims that her husband had campaigned for their son.

"I was the one who handled my son's campaign. What kind of mother would want her son to lose? The mayor had no hand in it," she told the INQUIRER.

In his answer to the petitioners' complaint, Trinidad pointed out that the SK leaders should have gone to the DILG first before filing a case in court.

Makati City services delivery gets high marks in survey

By DJ Yap

HALF OF THE RESPONDENTS in a survey of Makati City residents commissioned by the city are hopeful that the quality of life in the financial capital will improve in the next three years.

Less than half or 41 percent of the 200 respondents, on the other hand, perceive their quality of life to be better compared to three years ago, the survey conducted by the Philippine Survey and Research Center-Research International said.

According to the same study, the city government scored a 94 percent satisfaction rating for its programs and services while Mayor Jejomar Binay received a 96 percent satisfaction rating.

"The survey shows that the city government is headed in the right direction and that we are making the right decisions," Binay said in a statement.

Among the city government's services, its Yellow Card program which provides health benefits to cardholders was given the highest rating with 61 percent expressing satisfaction with the project.

The respondents also gave high marks to the city's free school supplies program for public school students, giving it a 34 percent satisfaction rating while the regular garbage collection and cleanliness drive got a 24 percent rating.

The PSRC-RI, a market research organization, conducted face-to-face interviews with the respondents last August, using questionnaires and visual aides. The respondents were chosen via random sampling.

The margin of error was not indicated in the survey results.

Makati's information and community relations department, which released the findings, said the survey was commissioned by the city to determine what the residents believe should be the city's government's priorities.

The ICRD added that the city government wanted to know what the residents thought of their performance.

Binay said the survey was a reflection of the "sterling performance" of the city government in addressing the needs of the populace.

"Makati prides itself in the best programs for health and education. We pour a lot of effort into keeping our citizenry healthy and educated," he said.

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- Tony Meloto, Gawad Kalinga

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US-led Mideast peace talks hit a snag

Bush urges leaders from both sides to make tough bargains

WASHINGTON—THE US-CHAMPIONED Middle East peace summit hit a snag on Monday as Palestinian and Israeli negotiators met into the night trying to hash out a written framework for future negotiations, officials said.

US President George W. Bush met with leaders from both sides in his Oval Office and later urged all parties to make the "difficult compromises" needed to midwife a Palestinian state living side by side at peace with Israel.

Bush, speaking on the eve of the high-stakes conference in Annapolis, Maryland, said he was "optimistic" about restarting peace talks after a seven-year freeze and reaffirmed what critics have called his wobbly personal stake in the effort.

"Tonight, I restate my personal commitment on behalf of the United States for all those in the Middle East who wish to live in freedom and peace. We stand with you at the Annapolis conference and beyond," he said in a two-minute toast.

"Achieving this goal requires difficult compromises and the Israelis and Palestinians have elected leaders committed to making them," said Bush, whose term ends in roughly 14 months.

Bush, who is making his strongest push for peace in seven years in office, heard broadly optimistic forecasts in separate White House talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas.

"This time it's different" because of the wider array of participants, Olmert said of the conference, which has drawn more than 50 organizations and countries including some 16 Arab nations.

Abbas was also upbeat as he met Bush, even though the Islamist movement Hamas, which romped to victory in January 2006 Palestinian parliamentary polls, said the Palestinians would not be bound by any decisions taken in Annapolis.

"We have a great deal of hope that this conference will produce permanent status negotiations, expanded negotiations, over all permanent status issues that would lead to a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian people," Abbas said.

But late Monday, aides to Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said the two negotiating teams were still meeting in a bid to reach an accord before Tuesday's Annapolis conference.

So-called "final status" issues group areas of major disagreement between Israelis and Palestinians on things like the borders of a future Palestinian state, the future of Jerusalem, and fate of Palestinian refugees.

And Olmert vowed there could be no deal unless the Palestinians halted attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip, the Hamas-controlled smaller half of the Palestinians' promised future state.

"If we are talking about a Palestinian state that includes both the West Bank and Gaza, we cannot take Gaza out of the context of the fight against terror," Olmert said.

Israel has insisted Abbas must crack down on militants before any implementation of an agreement, which the sides have said they wished to reach by the end of 2008. *AFP*

Beijing quells fears over dam project impact

BEIJING—CHINA ON TUESday sought to quell fears over huge problems surrounding the Three Gorges Dam, arguing that the advantages outweighed any troubles with the world's biggest hydroelectric facility.

"Overall, regarding the Three Gorges project's impact on the ecological environment, the benefits outweigh the negative consequences," Wang Xiaofeng, the head of the office in charge of constructing the dam, told reporters.

Wang was brought before the press after he and other Chinese officials warned recently of a plethora of problems related to the dam—which began operations last year—including landslides, soil erosion and water pollution.

Chinese officials who spoke at a conference on the dam in September warned of an environmental "catastrophe" from the massive project, in comments that were carried by the official Xinhua news agency and made global headlines.

"We cannot relax our guard against ecological and environmental security problems brought on by the Three Gorges project," Xinhua quoted Wang as saying at that conference.

"We absolutely cannot sacrifice our environment in exchange for temporary economic prosperity." The conference was told that the huge weight of the water behind the dam had started to erode the Yangtze river's banks in many places, which, together with frequent fluctuations in water levels, had triggered a series of landslides.

Official media then said last month that an additional four million people near the dam would need to be relocated to protect the region's environment.

But since then China's government-controlled press has published virtually only good news on the project in what has appeared to be a strong campaign to counter the remarks made at the conference.

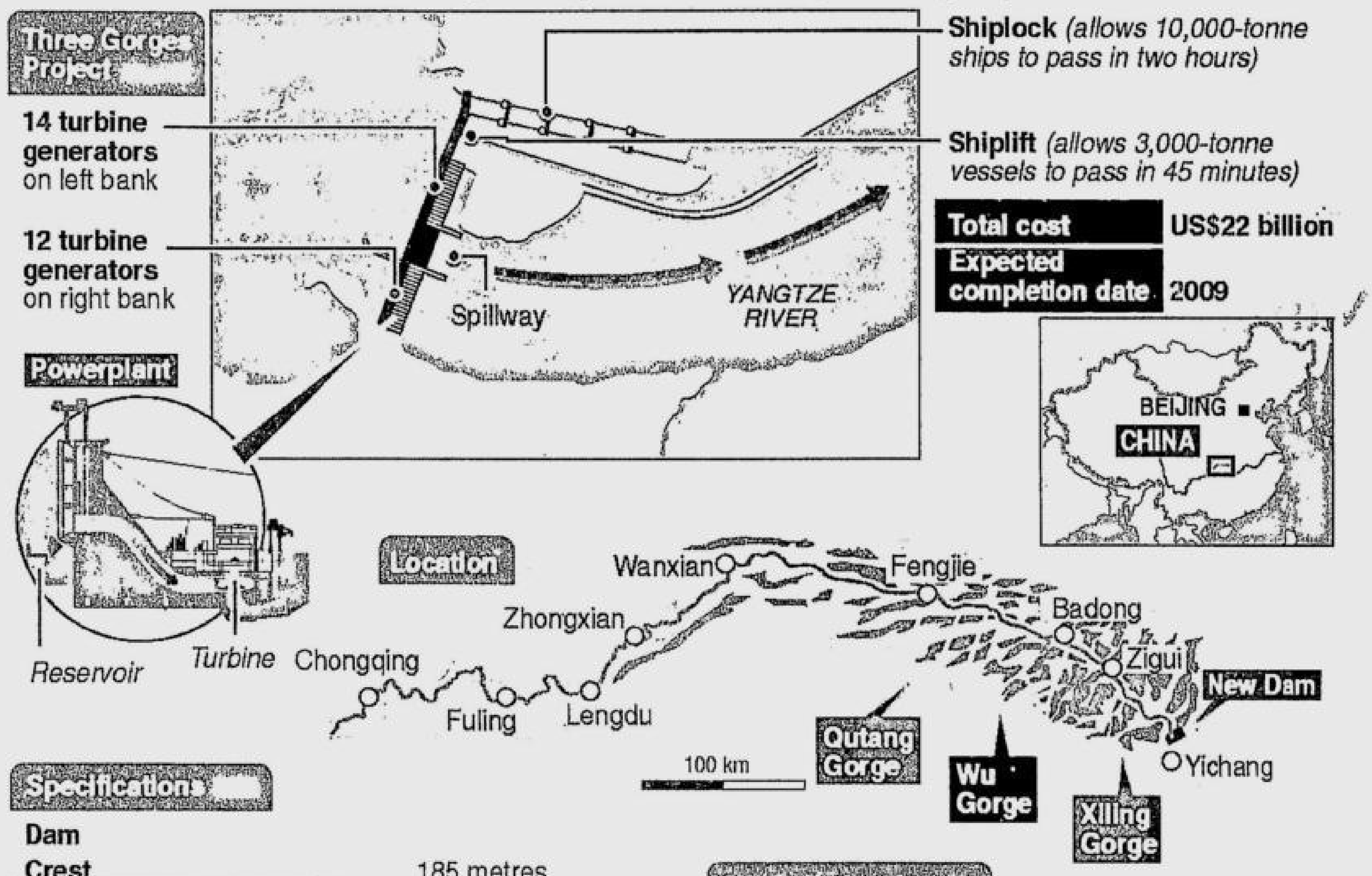
Wang on Tuesday stressed the "ecological benefits" brought by the project, such as reducing flooding and siltation for the Yangtze river, as well as cutting China's reliance on polluting coal for energy.

He also insisted that any problems related to the dam were not a surprise, and were in line with an environmental impact assessment done in 1991, three years before work began.

"We already suggested ... there were negative consequences and we were going to overcome them," he said. *AFP*

China's Three Gorges Dam

World's largest hydroelectric power project



Total cost	US$22 billion
Expected completion date	2009

Specifications

Dam	
Crest	185 metres
Length	2,309.5 metres
Reservoir	
Normal pool level	175 metres
Flood control level	145 metres
Total storage capacity	39.3 billion m^3
Flood control storage	22.1 billion m^3
Power generation	
Installed capacity	18,200 MW
Unit capacity	26 units, 700 MW/unit

Construction stages

1993-1997 Damming of Yangtze River

1998-2003 Reservoir sluice enable first batch of turbine generator units to generate electricity

2004-2009 All 26 turbine units start generating electricity

At least 1.4 million people displaced *(another 4 million will be "encouraged" to resettle elsewhere)*

Sources: AFP/IRN/CTGPC/Govt

271107 **AFP**

Riots hit Paris suburbs; scores hurt

FRENCH riot policemen fire rubber bullets behind a burning car during clashes with youths. REUTERS

VILLIERS-LE-BEL, FRANCE—Dozens of youths clashed with police on Monday for the second night in a row in a working- and lower-class suburb north of Paris, throwing stones, glass and firebombs against large contingents of heavily armed riot police officers and moving nimbly from target to target on several fronts, torching cars and a garbage truck.

President Nicolas Sarkozy, in China on Monday on an official visit, appealed for calm.

The clashes began when two teenagers traveling on a motorbike died in a collision with a police car on Sunday afternoon in the town of Villiers-le-Bel, about 12 miles north of Paris, in the Val d'Oise department. The two teenagers were identified in French news reports only as 15-year-old Moushin and 16-year-old Larami.

Raining projectiles

On Monday night, more than 100 youths had pushed riot police officers into the middle of a four-way intersection, raining projectiles on them from at least two directions. Police officers responded with tear gas and paint guns to mark the attackers for arrest. Broken glass and used tear-gas canisters littered the roads.

At least one police officer was wounded. Within sight of the intersection, a garbage truck was on fire, apparently unattended as youths were lined up behind it.

At least 15 cars were burned Monday, with the police guarding the local fire department and moving to protect firefighters as they put out fires.

At least three buildings received some fire damage, including a library and a post office, a spokesperson for the police in Val d'Oise said.

Many of the youths had lined up garbage cans in the middle of the street.

Cheering

Firecrackers could be heard. When a firebomb hit a garbage can, the youths could be heard cheering. Standing on the sideline of the battles, one youth was holding a poster of one of the two dead youths: "Deceased 25/11/07. Dead for nothing."

The incidents on Monday night took place not far from where Moushin and Larami died, and they followed other confrontations between youths and the police on Sunday night.

The police expected more unrest on Monday night. *NYT*

In hospice care, longer lives mean money lost

CAMDEN, ALABAMA—HUNdreds of hospice providers across the country are facing the catastrophic financial consequence of what would otherwise seem a positive development: their patients are living longer than expected.

Over the last eight years, the refusal of patients to die according to actuarial schedules has led the federal government to demand that hospices exceeding reimbursement limits repay hundreds of millions of dollars to Medicare.

The charges are assessed retrospectively, so in most cases the money has long since been spent on salaries, medicine and supplies. After absorbing huge assessments for several years, often by borrowing at high rates, a number of hospice providers are bracing for a new round that they fear may shut their doors.

One is Hometown Hospice Inc., which has been providing care since 2003 to some of the most destitute residents of Wilcox County, the poorest place in Alabama.

The locally owned, for-profit agency, which serves about 60 patients, mostly in their homes, had to repay the government $900,000, or 27 percent of its revenues, from its first two years of operation, said Tanya O. Walker-Butts, a co-owner. Its profits were wiped out in the time it took to open the demand letters, Walker-Butts said.

Hometown paid its first assessment with a bank loan. When the bank declined credit for the second year, the hospice structured a five-year payment plan with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the federal agency that administers the program, at 12.5 percent interest.

The next bill is expected any day. "If they hit us with a number in the several hundred-thousand range, I just don't see how we can survive," said Gaines C. McCorquodale, Hometown's other owner.

In the early days of the Medicare hospice benefit, which was designed for those with less than six months to live, nearly all patients were cancer victims, who tended to die relatively quickly and predictably once curative efforts were abandoned.

But in the last five years, hospice use has skyrocketed among patients with less predictable trajectories, like those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Those patients now form a majority of hospice consumers, authorities said. *NYT*

US soldiers fire on Iraqi minibus, kill 7 on board

BAGHDAD—SEVEN IRAQIS, among them three women and a child, were on Tuesday reported killed by the US military, a day after Washington and Baghdad agreed to keep American forces in Iraq beyond 2008.

The deaths of more civilians come as Iraqis begin reassessing the controversial role of the US military in their war-ravaged country.

Iraqi security officials said three women and a man were killed when the minibus in which they were travelling came under American military fire in Baghdad's northeastern Al-Shaab neighborhood.

The vehicle was carrying employees of Al-Rasheed bank and the gunfire wounded another two people—a woman and a man, they said.

A US military spokesperson said US forces fired on a minibus in Baghdad "after the driver failed to heed a warning shot."

"The bus was travelling on a street that is off-limits to vehicles other than passenger cars," the spokesperson said.

"Initial reporting indicates that two passengers were killed and four wounded. The incident is under investigation."

In a separate statement the military said its troops opened fire on a car which tried to speed through a road block during an operation against al-Qaida in Iraq on Monday, killing a child and two men.

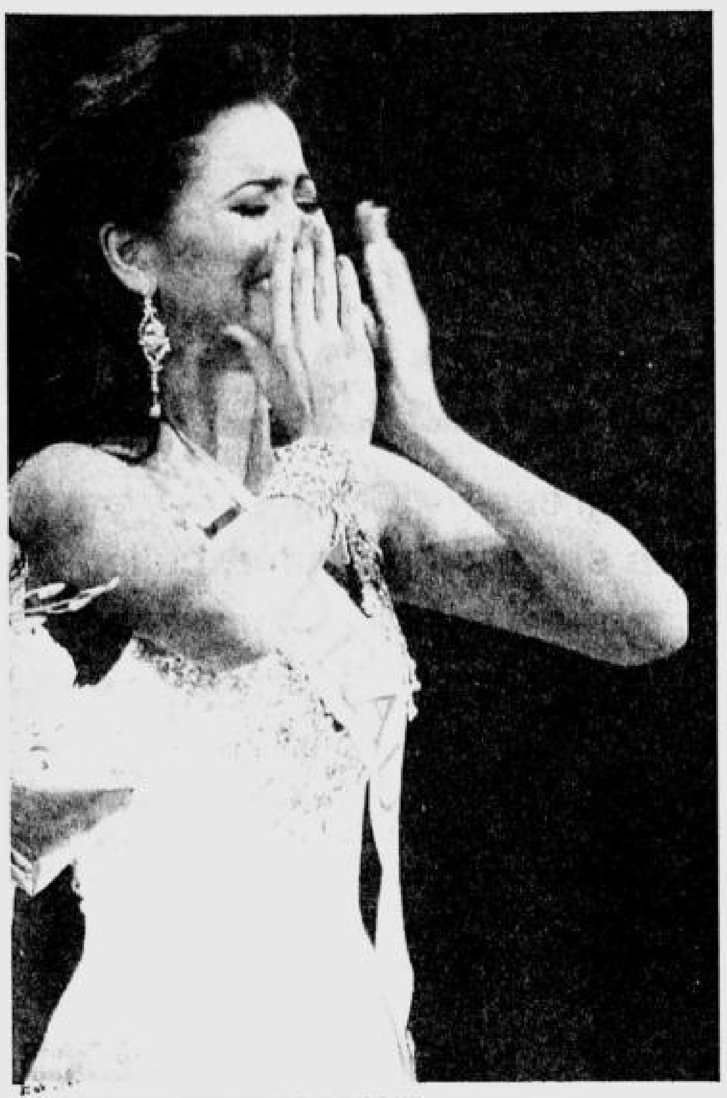
Two men in a vehicle sped towards the checkpoint and ignored warnings to stop while troops were conducting the operation in Baiji some 200 kilometres north of Baghdad, the statement said.

"The ground force fired warning shots, but the driver attempted to speed through the road block. Perceiving hostile intent, the ground force engaged, killing both men," the statement said.

A wounded child was found inside the vehicle and was transferred to a military medical facility where he died, it said.

Two al-Qaida leaders were killed in the operation, which also involved air strikes, it said.

"We regret that civilians are hurt or killed while coalition forces work diligently to rid this country of the terrorist networks that threaten the security of Iraq and our forces," said US military spokesperson Cmdr. Ed Buclatin. *AFP*



HAPPY FACE JUST A FRONT

Miss Puerto Rico Universe 2007 beauty pageant winner Ingrid Marie Rivera, from Dorado, reacts to her win at the Center of Performing Arts in San Juan in this Nov. 23 file photo. Someone doused her make-up and clothes with pepper spray, but Rivera put on a happy face and managed to win the pageant. She was all smiles in front of the audience and judges during the competition, which ended on Friday when she beat 29 rivals. But backstage, she had to strip off her clothes and ice down her face and body to fight swelling and hives. Pageant officials have vowed to get to the bottom of the attempted sabotage that tainted the pageant. REUTERS

Musharraf starts farewell to troops

RAWALPINDI—PRESIDENT PERvez Musharraf began a pomp-filled farewell to his troops on Tuesday, one day before he bows to global pressure and quits as Army chief to become Pakistan's civilian leader.

Facing mounting anger at home and abroad over his three-week-old state of emergency, the beleaguered US ally embarked on a two-day tour of the military establishment to say his goodbyes.

He is to resign as chief of Army staff on Wednesday. The following day, he will take the oath for a second five-year term as president—but this time without the uniform that he has described as being like his skin.

His first stop on Tuesday was at the Joint Staffs headquarters, combining the top commands of the Army, navy and air forces, where Musharraf was presented with a guard of honor.

A military band played martial tunes and the national anthem before troops marched past Musharraf, who wore ceremonial dress decorated with medals and a green sash.

He also had a 15-minute meeting with Gen. Tariq Majid, the chair of the joint chiefs of staff at which they exchanged souvenirs.

He was later to visit the separate headquarters of the air force and navy, officials said.

"Gen. Musharraf will make a series of farewell visits to various military headquarters on Tuesday and Wednesday," presidential spokesperson Rashid Qureshi told AFP.

On Wednesday he will be driven to the Army's general headquarters to hand over his position as head of the nuclear-armed military to his heir apparent, former spy chief Gen. Ashfaq Kiyani.

By resigning from the military, Musharraf, who grabbed power in a coup in 1999 and then signed up to the US-led fight against al-Qaida and the Taliban, is meeting a key demand of the international community. *AFP*

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **Land Bank Realty Development Corporation (LBRDC)** through its **Committee on Bids and Awards (CBA)**, invites all contractors, registered with and classified at least **"(SMALL/MEDIUM)"** by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) for Building and Industrial Plant to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects:

PROJECT	CONTRACT DURATION/FUNDING	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
LBP IMUS BRANCH RENOVATION (RE-BID)	45 CD, LBRDC FUND	P 674,454.50
LBP NAPOCOR E.O. BRANCH RENOVATION	45 CD, LBRDC FUND	P 414,000.00
LBP MUNTINLUPA BRANCH BLDG. CONSTRUCTION	75 CD, LBRDC FUND	P 5,440,000.00
LBP VILLAMOR AIR BASE BRANCH RENOVATION	45 CD, LBRDC FUND	P 1,630,000.00

The Schedule of CBA activities is as follows:

Activities	Date/Time	Venue
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letter of Intent (LOI) including application for Eligibility	NOV. 28-DEC. 05, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30 PM	LBRDC
2. Issuance of Eligibility Documents	DEC. 06-13, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30 PM	LBRDC
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	DEC. 14, 2007 @ 2:30 PM	LBRDC
4. Issuance of Bidding Documents	DEC. 17-24, 2007 @ 9:30-4:30 PM	LBRDC
5. Pre-Bidding Conference	DEC. 27, 2007 @ 2:00 PM	LBRDC
6. Opening of Bids (Bidding)	JAN. 08, 2008 @ 2:00 PM	LBRDC

LBRDC will issue to prospective bidders the Eligibility Forms at Land Bank Realty Development Corporation's (LBRDC) Offices at the 30/F, Land Bank Plaza, 1598 M.H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila upon their submission of the Letter of Intent (LOI), presentation of the original copy of their contractor's license issued by PCAB, and upon payment of a non-refundable and non-transferable fee of **P500.00**. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements and may obtain the results of the Eligibility Checks based on the schedule above. Bid Documents will be made available for issuance to eligible bidders upon presentation of their Notice of Eligibility and payment of a non-refundable fee of **P1,000.00**.

LBRDC reserves the right to change the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC), date of issuance of bid documents, pre-bid conference, submission and opening of bids.

LBRDC likewise reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor whose bid is evaluated to be most advantageous to LBRDC. Furthermore, LBRDC is not obliged to compensate/indemnify contractors for any epxense or loss that contractors may incur in the preparation of their bids, nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

For further details, please call **Mr. Allan Redondo/Aries L. Mendoza/Nenette Camingawan** at 405-7169 / 405-7402 / 405-7135.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. SERGIO R. BERNARDO**
Committee on Bids and Awards

(PDI–Nov. 28, 2007)

Naming of teddy bear leads to teacher's arrest

NAIROBI, KENYA—THE SUdanese police arrested a British schoolteacher and accused her of insulting Islam after she allowed her 7-year-old pupils to name a class teddy bear Muhammad, Sudanese officials said on Monday.

The teacher, Gillian Gibbons, was arrested Sunday in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, after a number of parents complained, said Rabie A. Atti, a government spokesperson.

"How can you call a bear Muhammad?" he said. "Muhammad is the holy prophet of Islam."

Rabie said the authorities had obtained a letter Gibbons sent home with students explaining that her primary school class was doing a project on animals and had adopted a teddy bear named Muhammad. *NYT*

CHAVEZ REUTERS

Chavez earns more enemies

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—HAS Hugo Chavez become his own worst enemy?

In the past few weeks alone, he has hurled insults at Colombia's president, Venezuela's Roman Catholic hierarchy and Spain's former prime minister. The kings of Spain and now Saudi Arabia have publicly rebuked him for impertinence.

Even some allies are annoyed at the Venezuelan president's acid tongue, constant meddling in other nation's affairs and seeming inability to divorce the personal from the political.

But with only days to go before a Dec. 2 referendum on dozens of constitutional changes that could cement his power in Venezuela, Chavez appears more concerned about his popularity at home than whom he might anger abroad.

Besides, taking on Spanish royalty and Colombia's right-wing president can only win him votes.

Chavez has never been one to hold back his bluster, and when Colombian President Alvaro Uribe canceled his high-profile effort to mediate a prisoner swap with leftist rebels, Chavez let loose. He also took on Venezuela's top Catholic clerics, saying "the cardinal and the bishops are dolts and mental retards." *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Suicide car bomb kills 2 Afghans

KABUL—A suicide car bomb aimed at US-led coalition soldiers exploded on Tuesday in an upmarket Kabul suburb that is home to foreign embassies and aid agencies, killing at least two Afghans, police said. The insurgent Taliban movement claimed responsibility for the blast in the Wazir Akbar Khan suburb, close to the Pakistani embassy and a World Bank building and opposite an Afghan defense ministry office. "It was a suicide bombing targeting foreigners," said Kabul criminal investigation police chief, Gen. Alishah Paktiawal. At least three other Afghan guards were also wounded, police added. *AFP*

A new message from Bin Laden

CAIRO—Al-Qaida's media wing announced on Monday that it would soon release a new message from the terror network's leader Osama bin Laden. As-Sahab said Bin Laden would address European countries in the message. It did not elaborate. The advertisement, which was posted on Monday on an Islamic militant website, featured a photograph of the bearded Bin Laden dressed in a traditional white Arab robe. As-Sahab did not say when the message would be released and whether it would be a video or audio tape. But the US-based IntelCenter, which monitors terror websites, said the message would be a video and would be released within 72 hours. *AFP*

Malaysia's transplant recipient dies

KUALA LUMPUR—A woman who received a new heart and lungs this month in Malaysia's first double-organ transplant died on Tuesday of a blood infection, the hospital said. Siti Salmah Jasni, 18, who had suffered from pulmonary hypertension for the last five years, was given the heart and lungs of a woman who died in a road accident. But she developed a blood infection after the Nov. 2 surgery performed by a team of specialists at the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur, the hospital said. "There were no evidence of rejection for both the heart and lungs after the transplantation. However, she succumbed to septicemia due to severe infection," it said in a statement. *AP*

Stricter punishment for gun crimes

TOKYO—Japan will toughen punishment for firing or owning guns in connection with organized crime activities following a series of high-profile shootings by gangsters in a country that has long prided itself on crime-free streets. The upper house of the Diet, or Japan's parliament, passed legislation on Monday to revise the firearms control law, according to the upper house's website. The legislation, which passed the lower house earlier this month, is expected to take effect by the end of the year pending its official publication, according to an official of the National Police Agency, which drafted the bill. The official spoke on condition of anonymity, citing protocol. Shootings are still relatively rare in Japan, but authorities are concerned about a recent rise in crimes involving guns, which are already tightly controlled. Currently, firing a gun is punishable by three years to life in prison. *AP*

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SMART takes the lead in mobile advertising

The Changing Face of the Ad Landscape

All roads led to Subic last week where the 20th Philippine Advertising Congress (AdCongress) was held. Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart), the country's leading wireless services provider, pulled out all the stops to power the much-awaited, biennial event and make it a more exciting experience for all delegates.

More than 3,300 advertising and marketing professionals, teachers, and students trooped to the Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center, to listen to an impressive roster of speakers, all global and local industry experts. Themed "The New Order", this year's AdCongress highlighted the huge potential of new media, such as the Internet and mobile, as a way to effectively and efficiently deliver brand messages.

Key speaker Neil Gaiman, world-renowned and best-selling author of novels, comic books, and children's books, went right to the gut of the theme when he encouraged all delegates to embrace imagination and innovation, in order to survive and thrive in the so-called "New Order".

Neil Gaiman during his "Gathering of Dreamlings and Nightmares" talk.

Engaging consumers via mobile

Danilo Mojica speaks about the possibilities in mobile advertising.

Danilo Mojica, head of Smart's Wireless Consumer Division, spoke of the expanding role of mobile in today's marketing and advertising landscape, and how Smart is shaking things up with its foray into mobile advertising, an industry predicted to explode into a billion-dollar global industry in just a few years.

With over 50 million actively subscribed mobile users in the country, and the greater depth of consumer engagement which could be achieved via mobile, this medium has become the single most powerful platform in communicating with consumers – and advertisers are looking more and more closely at its huge potential. According to Mojica, mobile does not compete with traditional media, instead, "what mobile offers is convergence and synergy to tie together the disparate strands of a traditional ad and promo campaign".

Cutting-edge products and services

In keeping with the AdCongress' themes of creating change and embracing innovation, Smart showcased at the four-day event the most cutting-edge of its products and services.

AdCongress delegates took advantage of the free, high-speed Internet access via 3G offered at the Smart Pentagon, the sleek, stylish, and futuristic booth which featured all the technologies brought in by the cellular operator especially to add to the event's excitement.

Just plug it

Delegates enjoy free internet at the launch of SMART Bro Plan 799.

It also launched the new Smart Bro Plan 799, which comes with a portable USB modem that could be plugged into a desktop or laptop, for instant access to the Internet anytime, anywhere.

SMART promotes myTV that allows live TV broadcasts anytime anwyhere.

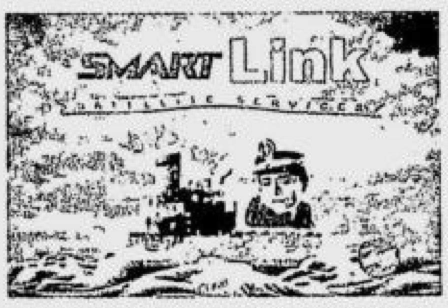
Smart's myTV, the technology that makes TV-viewing right in one's hands a most impressive reality, wowed AdCongress delegates who were able to experience first-hand its amazing clarity and convenience.

Advertising bigshots of tomorrow attend AdCongress today

In its bid to help the students of today realize their potentials as the advertising bigshots of tomorrow, Smart sent 43 students, all members of the winning organizations that took part in the *Smart Buddy Bigshot Academy* program, to join the AdCongress. The Smart student-delegates took the opportunity to learn invaluable insights from the event, which gathered the best and the brightest of the advertising industry.

Delegates grab gifts and gadgets from Smart Pentagon

At the Smart Pentagon, hundreds of AdCongress delegates lined up to register in the high-tech raffle, where Smart put up for grabs the latest, most coveted gadgets and gifts. A shower of shiny-new Apple iPod Touch units, Nokia and Motorola mobile handsets, Sony Digital cameras, and Philip Stein wristwatches were given away by Smart to more than 40 lucky delegates.



As a fitting end to Smart's well-received participation at the AdCongress, one of its ad agencies, DM9JaymeSyfu, took home Bronze Araw Awards in animation and copy for the Smart Link "Booklet" TV commercial. The Araw Awards serve as the highlight of every AdCongress, and are handed out to recognize the best creative advertising work from among thousands of entries.

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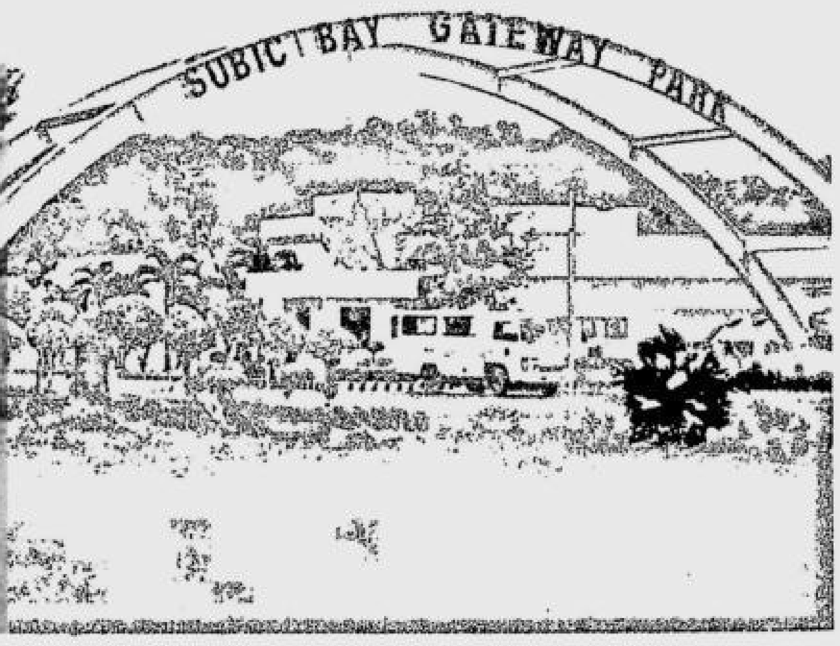

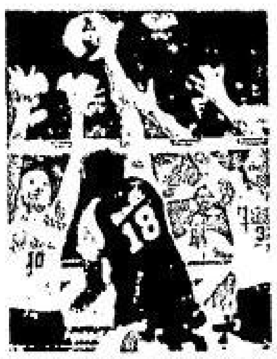

WHAT'S INSIDE

Tigresses rip Lady Eagles /A32

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Filipino shooters fire blanks

Aguado, Medina, Gonzales miss out on SEAG medals

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

NIKKI Medina: Falls 6 points short

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—WAY OFF TARGET.

That's how the first day of the Philippines' overall title retention campaign in the 24th Southeast Asian Games went as Filipino shooters failed to hit their marks and bombed out one after the other Tuesday at the Thailand Shooting and Clay target ranges here.

Carolino Gonzales finished 12th out of 17 participants in the men's 10-meter air pistol; Susan Aguado beat only two of 16 contenders in the 25m women's sports pistol and young, bright hope Nikki Medina finished just six points off but out of the 50m rifle prone medal list to cap a cold, cold Philippine start.

The 18-year-old Medina, a charming nursing student, floundered in her final two strings, scoring just 96 points on each trip to finish with a 581 total, good for ninth place in the event won via a

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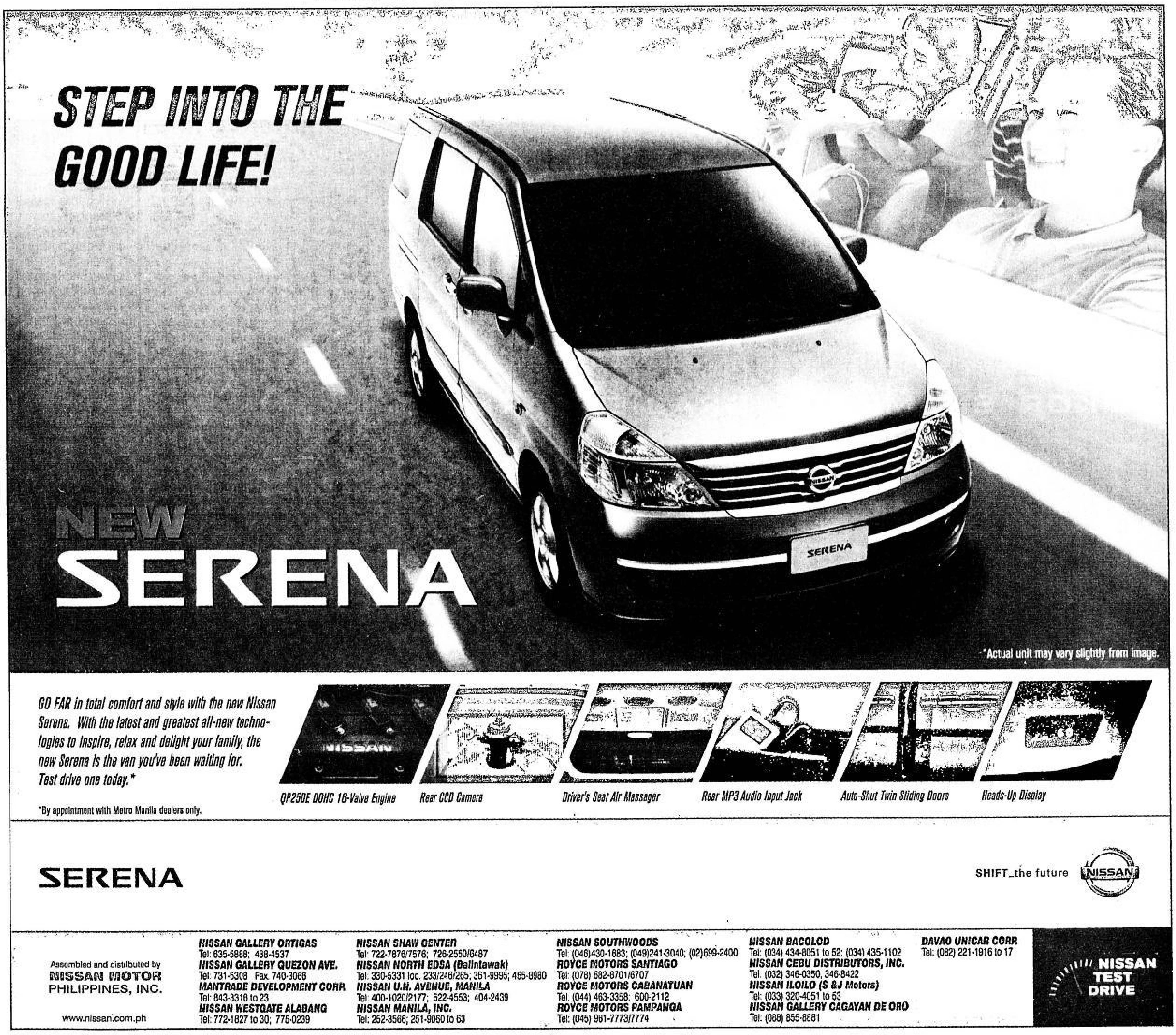
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V-LEAGUE PLAYOFF

Tigresses rip Lady Eagles

By Romina S. Austria

GAMES FRIDAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs Adamson (Battle for 3rd)
6 p.m.—UST vs SSC (Game 1, Finals)

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS FINALLY found a way to beat Ateneo as it posted a 25-17, 25-23, 23-25, 25-19 victory that sent the Tigresses to their second consecutive finals appearance yesterday in the 2007 Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference at The Arena in San Juan.

The Tigresses arranged a best-of-three championship duel against the San Sebastian Lady Stags, who were swept by the España-based tossers in the first conference finals.

The Lady Eagles tangle with the Adamson Lady Falcons in another series for third place.

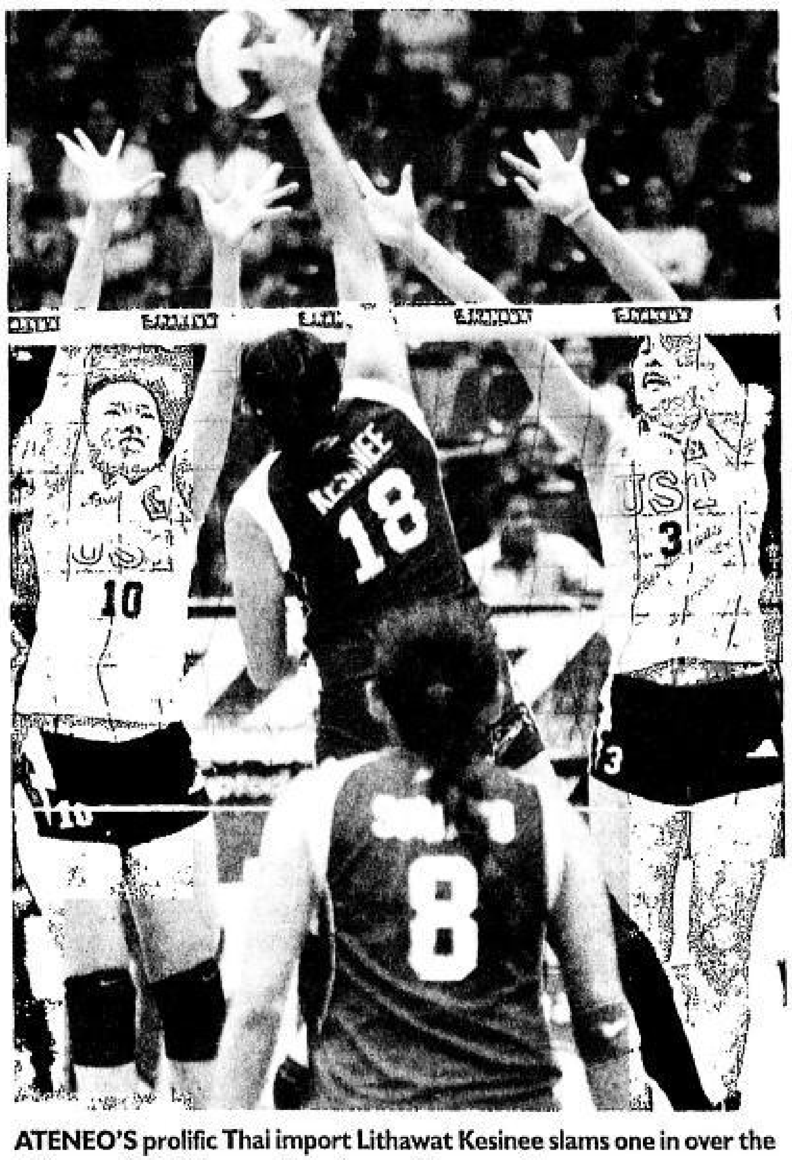
Both match-ups start on Friday.

UST's winning formula wasn't a complicated one. Guest player Suzanne Roces said they met Monday night and made a pact to bring back their winning ways.

"We cannot afford to lose and let our supporters down," said the 22-year-old Roces, noting that teamwork was missing during their last two matches which they both lost. "Coach (Augusto Santamaria) told us that we should just let our usual performance come out."

The Lady Eagles forced yesterday's playoff when they beat the Tigresses last Sunday for their third win in four semifinal matches. They also beat the Tigresses in the elimination round.

UST looked headed for a straight-set victory after erecting a 12-4 spread in the third set, with Roces and sophomore Angeli Tabaquero doing most of the damage. Ateneo also lost Patty Taganas to a left knee injury during that UST rampage when she fell after being blocked by Tabaquero.



ATENEO'S prolific Thai import Lithawat Kesinee slams one in over the defense of UST's Joanne Torrejos and Suzanne Roces. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Plucky Puyat rules world teens golf tilt

PUYAT

FILIPINO JUNGOLFER Marcel Puyat upended Canadian Landon Lyons in a sudden-death playoff to bag the 15-19 age-group crown of the Teens On The Green World Championship in San Antonio, Texas, Sunday.

Puyat made a routine par on the first extra hole, the par-5 No. 1, to clinch the title as Lyons drove into the rough and missed an 8-foot putt for par.

Victory for the 14-year-old Puyat seemed ominous after he banged in a curling four-foot putt for par on the 18th to preserve an even-par 72 and force a playoff with Lyons.

The two tied at 217 after the 54-hole event with the Filipino shooting earlier rounds of 70 and 75. Lyons closed out with a 71.

Puyat, bucking biting cold, had a three-shot lead going to the 10th hole but he three-putted the 15th and then Lyons pulled even with back-to-back birdies from the 16th.

Ateneo, Cebu's UV seek Champions League title today

GAMES TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
2 p.m.—STI vs UST (Battle for 3rd)
4 p.m.—Univ. of Visayas vs Ateneo (Finals)

ATENEO GETS A CHANCE TO REDEEM itself when it takes on Southern powerhouse University of Visayas for the Fil-Oil/Flying V National Collegiate Champions League crown today at The Arena.

The Blue Eagles, the heartbreak kids of the last UAAP, and the Green Lancers seek their first title in the tournament among the country's best collegiate squads when they clash at 4 p.m.

University of Santo Tomas and STI dispute third spot earlier at 2 p.m.

"Ateneo is strong, but I'm also very confident with my team," said Lancers coach Boy Cabahug of his seven-time Cebu Schools Athletic Foundation Inc. champs.

"What's disappointing is we've been very dominant in Cebu, but every time we come here in Manila, it's always a major adjustment. I think this time we've adjusted, we've been practicing everyday here."

The Green Lancers disposed of the STI Olympians with an 80-71 triumph, while the Blue Eagles, denied a UAAP title shot by their arch rival and eventual champion La Salle Green Archers recently, crushed the Santo Tomas Tigers, 92-66, in their semifinal matches last Monday.

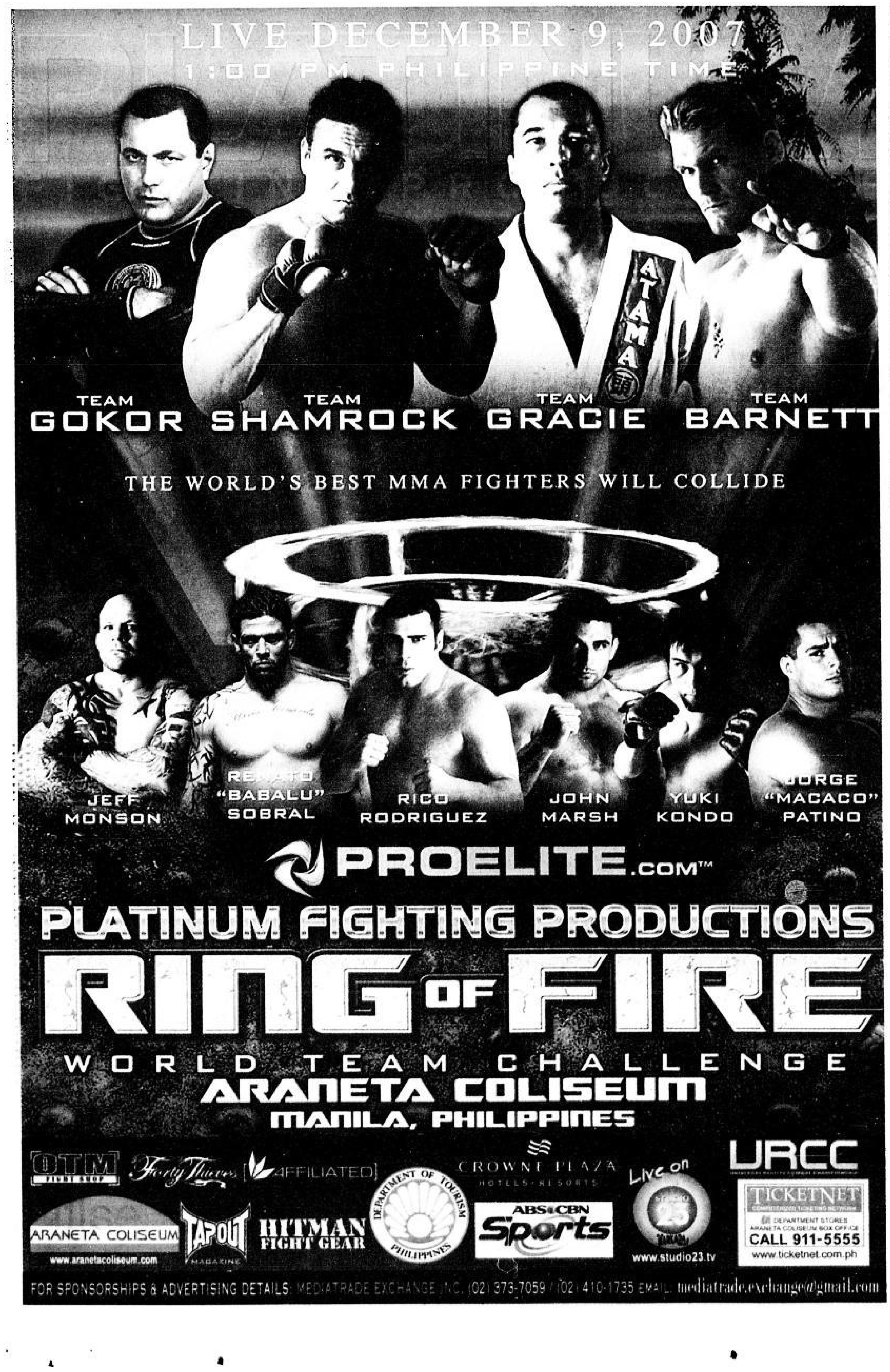
Chris Tiu, who will see action for the national men's team in the Southeast Asian Games next week, topscored with 19 points and Ford Arao added 17 despite rarely showing up in the Eagles' practices.

"They have their responsibilities with the national team and the PBL," said Ateneo coach Norman Black. "We really don't know what's going to happen when the game starts, but both Ford and Chris seem to be in pretty good shape."

Rino Berame dominated the paint to finish with 21 points, 17 rebounds and four blocks in the Lancers' semifinal win.

Greg Slaughter, a 6-foot-11 Fil-Am, will be another Lancer threat along with guards Von Lanete and Ritchum Dennison.

Jasmine W. Payo



The Best Mixed Martial Arts Fighters Will Collide

Platinum Fighting Productions, will hold the first-ever International Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) competition in the Philippines. The Philippines is the first country where the MMA fighters of this generation will contend in as part of their Asian Tour.

Fighting Art used to be divided into only two disciplines: striking - karate, judo, taekwondo, boxing, jet kune do, kung-fu, gung-ho and other forms and grappling - grabs, holds, joint-manipulation, joint-locks, throws and slams that were applied to wrestling, jiu-jitsu, aikido, pankration, sambo and even our very own "dumog" that originated from Ilo-Ilo and "mumbaki" of the mountain province.

As a pop-culture phenomenon, Martial Arts (Fighting Art), in the world of sports, evolved and hyper-bred into what is currently known as Mixed Martial Arts. The traditional karate, judo, taekwondo, aikido, wrestling and other forms combined to form a superior discipline of fighting art.

Since time immemorial, top ranked martial artists often thought and even debated on whose form of discipline is superior among all others. This led to the occurrence of having "kumite" - martial arts tournament and other underground tournaments all over the world.

The best fighters from each discipline were invited to compete all over the world at the time when there was still no weight class, no rounds, and rules barely applied but has now evolved to becoming a fight classified by weight categories wherein winners are determined by a referee's decision or by knock-out (KO) or technical knock-out (TKO).

"We will render the best MMA competition ever held in the Philippines with an international blend of the best MMA fighters ever," Tony Abaya, representative of Platinum Fighting Productions in the Philippines said.

Platinum Fighting Productions gathered the best fighting teams headed by Ken Shamrock, Royce Gracie, Josh Barnett, Gokor Chivichyan and Kimo Leopoldo.

"We hope to dramatically improve the quality of local fighters by exposing them to the international caliber of fighting most especially of the icons of this sport," Abaya added.

This generation's international top stars will collide in this action packed event entitled "The Ring of Fire" World Team Challenge that will be held on December 9, 2007 at the Araneta Coliseum from 1:00pm - 5:00pm and will be aired live on Studio 23.

For more information and other details, you may contact Mediatrade Exchange Inc. at 373-70-59 or 0920-9673784; or via email at mediatrade.exchange@gmail.com.

SPORTS WATCH

UGBA stagfest lines up 96 tiffs

BIGTIME STAGFIGHTING shifts to San Juan Coliseum as the UGBA Heritage Cup National 9-Stag Derby fires off today with 96 fights backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Today's 3-stag battle will be the last elimination round in Metro Manila, according to Rene Diaz, head of United Gamecock Breeders Association. Breeders may join the final qualifying rounds on Nov. 30 at Panguil Bay (Ozamiz City) and San Manuel Cockpit (Isabela).

Roligon 5-cock derby slated

The 2007-08 COCK season formally starts this Saturday at Roligon Mega Cockpit via the "2M Weder Weder Lang" 5-cock derby backed mainly by Lakpue Drug, Inc. Participants seeing action in Saturday's 2-cock eliminations must submit their entries on Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. For inquiries, call 8512275, 8331638 or 8529812. Elimination rounds are also lined up on Dec. 4 and 6. The finals is on Dec. 8.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Beautiful Smile (2), Heza Natve (6), Sweetsouthernsaint (5), Posse Comitatus (3)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Dynamic Jason (6), Letshaveaparty (5), Rivaldo (5), Petro Dollar (3)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Afire (6), Kampai (1), Wowful (4), Centaur Khan (5)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Macaleion (8), Reptoid (5), Queen Banana (4), Unleashed (6), Go Go Elgene (7)
Race 5—(Tri)—Sambat (5), Hazit Coming (2), Brazilian Babe (3)
Race 6—(Tri)—Andee's Rum/Victory Joe (3), Enjoyable (8), Katmae/Wooden Ship (2), Potchi /Silky Pants (5)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—West N Wild (8), Holy King (5), Hurry My Love (7), Red Hot Water (4), Joker (2)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Blue Sheikh (8), Silent Operator (10), Virgin Hill (7), Crew Cut (12), Yanong Rikit (6), Gung Ho (11)

Paragua, Andador rout foes

MARK Paragua impresses with strong positional plays.

Standings after seven rounds:

6.0 points—H. Ni (China), C. Li (China); 5.5—**M. Paragua (RP), R. Andador (RP)**; 5.0—W. Zhou (China), R. Li (China), Z. Zhong (Singapore); 4.5—Q. Huang China), **W. So (RP), E. Torre (RP), O. Dimakiling (RP), R. Dableo (RP), B. Nadera (RP), E. Senador (RP), R. Nolte (RP), O. Barbosa (RP), D. Ballecer (RP)**; 4.0—**J. Gonzales (RP), J. Sadorra (RP), H. Nouri (RP), V. Sevillano (RP), E. Fernandez (RP)**, Z. Jilin (China), W. Yu (China), D. T. Hai (Vietnam), N.A. Dung (Vietnam), Tirto (Indonesia)

By Roy Luarca

NATIONAL MASTER ROLANDO ANDADOR PULLED OFF A shocker while Grandmaster Mark Paragua flashed his old fiery form to spearhead the Philippines' bid in the President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Cup international chess championships at the Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Parañaque City Monday night.

The 29-year-old Andador trounced Vietnamese GM Nguyen Anh Dung to keep pace with Paragua, who bested International Master Ronald Dableo, after seven rounds of the event being dominated by the vaunted Chinese.

Paragua, ranked fourth in the country after once being its top player, and Andador raised their total to 5.5 points, threatening Chinese co-leaders GM Ni Hua and Li Chao.

Ni and Li humbled Filipino hopefuls IM Oliver Dimakiling and GM-candidate Wesley So, respectively, for 6.0 points.

Adeptly handling white, Andador, pride of Talisay City in Cebu province, forced the Vietnamese champion to resign after 37 moves of the Slav in a performance that belied his ranking of 48th in the nine-round Swiss system event.

Ni downed Dimakiling in 23 moves of the Sicilian Alapin, while Li, seeded third, tamed the time-troubled So in 40 moves of the Sicilian Dragon.

Other Filipinos who got sidetracked were GM-candidate Jayson Gonzales, who bowed to GM Zhang Zhong of Singapore; IM Julio Catalino Sadorra, who yielded to Weiqi Zhou of China; and Fide Master Fernie Donguines, who fell to WGM Zhang Jilin of China.

GM Eugene Torre, the pillar of Philippine chess, avoided the rash of misfortunes by trashing China's Xiaowen Zhang and climbing to 4.5 points in the company of So, Dimakiling and six others.

Also at 4.5 were IM Barlo Nadera, who split the point with IM Tirto of Indonesia; NM Rolando Nolte, who thwarted Fernandito Pialan; Oliver Barbosa, who ripped Surya Wahyudi of Indonesia; and Dino Ballecer, who stunned IM Ronald Bancod.

The country's top player, GM Rogelio Antonio Jr. beat Alex Milagrosa to snap his four-draw string and improve to 3.5 points.

In all-female matches, Singaporean Victoria Chan whipped Filipino Cristy Lamiel Bernales even as compatriot Beverly Mendoza drew with Singaporean WFM Li Yang. *Roy Luarca*

Thais surge ahead as RP golfers find TCC too forbidding

By Roy Luarca

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—FILIPINO golfers were supposed to exploit their familiarity with The Country Club course and pull away early from their foreign counterparts here yesterday.

Instead, it was the locals who fumbled while the visitors, led by the Thais, surged ahead in the first round of the Putra Cup.

Providing a glimpse of what to expect in the Thailand Southeast Asian Games, the Thais pooled a two-over-par 212 and erected a five-stroke lead over reigning champion Singapore and Hong Kong, which assembled 217s.

The Filipinos, in one of their worst starts ever in the annual event also known as the Southeast Asian Amateur Golf Team Championship, could do no better than a slew of 74s in their home course and landed at the cellar with the Malaysians at 222.

Ferdie Aunzo blew a 35 at the front with four bogeys in a birdieless stint at the back and ended up with a 74 like Jay Bayron, Mark Fernando and Jhonnel Ababa.

Tapped to reinforce the Philippine bid here and in the SEA Games, Bayron dropped three strokes early in his round, including a double bogey on the par-3 No. 3, and never recovered en route to nines of 38-36.

Struggling for form, Fernando was five-over after 11 holes then closed out with a birdie even as Ababa settled for a 37-37 card.

Ironically, it was on this same course that the Filipinos scored a sweep in the 2005 SEA Games Asian Games with Juvic Pagunsan powering the team to victory while bagging top individual honors.

Varut Chomchalam birdied three of the last five holes en route to a 69 to lead the Thais. Varan Israbhakdi added a 71 and Thanyakorn Krongpha a 72.

The Thais were so solid that ace player Kiradech Aphibarnrat's 73 didn't count in the four-to-play, three-to-count event.

Chomchalam opened a two-shot lead over Zhiqun Lam of Singapore, which topped last year's edition in Papua, New Guinea; Jimmy Ko of Hong Kong and Israbhakdi in the individual race.

PFF readies welcome for football head

LOCAL FOOTBALL STAKEHOLDERS will be in full force to welcome world football head Sepp Blatter when he visits Manila on Dec. 7.

Newly elected Philippine Football Federation president Jose Mari Martinez made the assurance as he props up preparations for the celebration of a century of football in the country.

Martinez, who edged Ed Formoso, 15-14, for the PFF's top post on Nov. 24, said he was optimistic of uniting all of the association's members in time for Blatter's visit.

"I am all for unification and transparency," said Martinez in the PSA forum at the Shakey's UN Avenue branch where he was joined by Cathy Rivilla, overall chairperson of the Philippine centennial celebrations.

A former national team standout who once saw action in the 1972 World Cup eliminations, the 55-year-old Martinez said he will have a one-on-one talk with Blatter during his hectic 24-hour visit in the country. *With a report from Cedelf P. Tupas, Inquirer Visayas*

Pacman team gains final vs Pagadian five

TAGAYTAY CITY—MP GENSAN PACMAN and Pagadian scored contrasting victories Monday night to forge a finals showdown in the 2007 Tagaytay-NBC International Invitational Cup basketball tournament at the Tolentino Sports and Activity Center here.

Boxing icon Manny Pacquiao's Warriors came from behind to trim Tagaytay-Spring Cooking Oil, 79-75, after Mayor Sammy Co's Explorers had blasted Montana Pawnshop-Davao, 98-82, in their respective semifinal matches.

Gensan and Pagadian were fighting it out for the crown at press time last night.

Rolly Menor led the Warriors with 20 points but it was Miller Dennison's fourth quarter heroics that carried MP Pacman past the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Mayor Bambol Tolentino.

With Tagaytay leading 64-53 early in the payoff period, Dennison banged in nine straight points to move Gensan within 64-62 at the 5:58 mark.

The scores:

PAGADIAN 98—Sinco 19, Naron 14, Villaver 10, Orquillas 10, Quilo 9, Benitez 8, Santiago 7, Pamaran 6, Espiritu 6, Latoreno 4, Ayuk 4, Saludsod 2

DAVAO 82—Fernandez 13, Clavel 13, Ayson 11, Dawal 11, Braga 10, Abanes 9, Poloyapoy 6, Quibod 4, Lamocha 3, Jawod 2

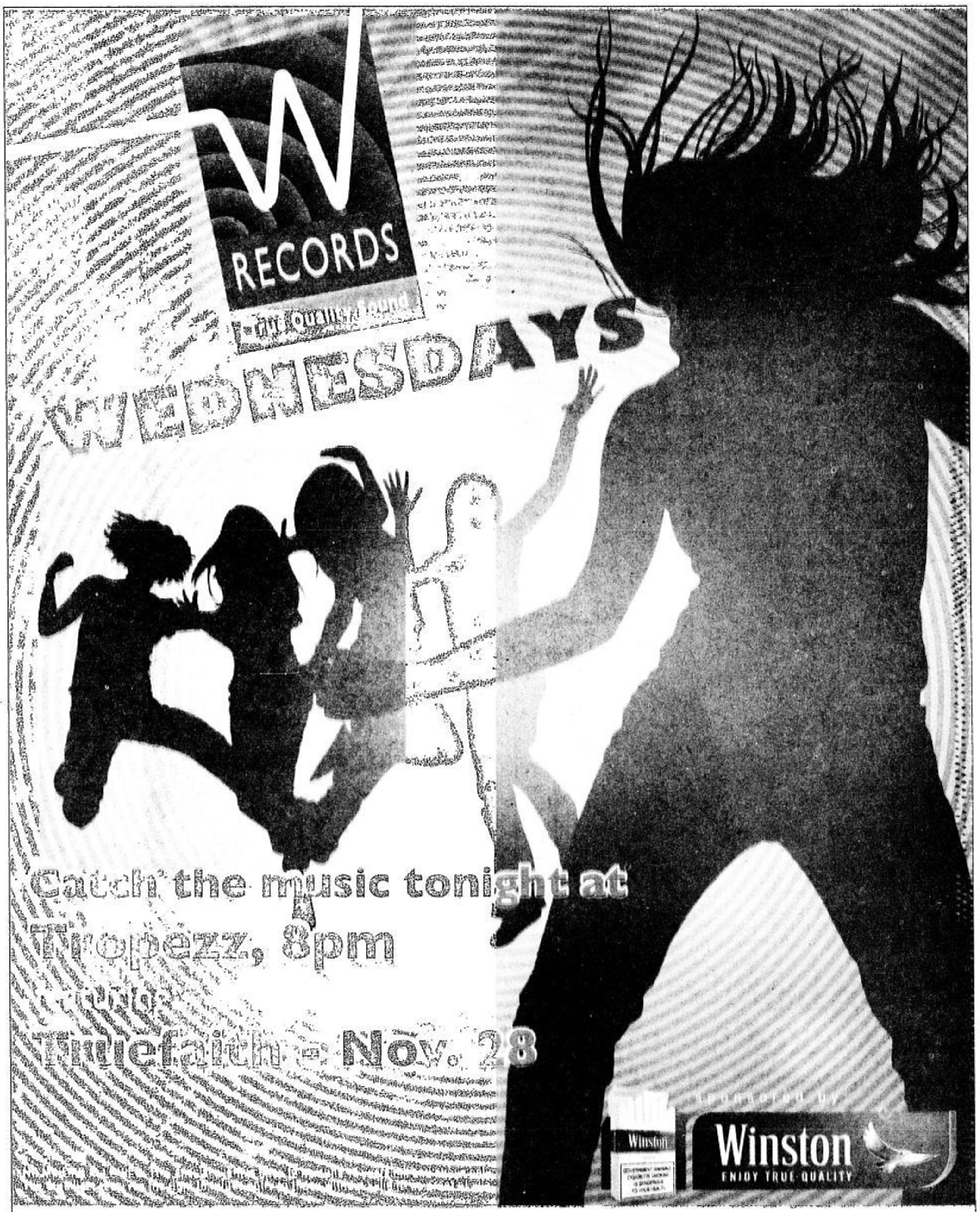
Quarters: 24-28, 52-38, 77-55, 98-82

* * *

GENSAN 79—Menor 20, Tadena 14, Dennison 11, Rubi 9, Daja 8, Farochilen 6, Coronado 5, Lumantas 2, Ramos 2, Recustodio 2, Medalla 0

TAGAYTAY 75—Capobres 25, Marquez 14, De Castro 14, Tajonera 9, Guiyab 8, Reyes 3, Villamin 2, Yambao 0, Cuenca 0

Quarters: 22-16, 32-34, 53-59, 79-75



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Favorites fall flat

Jazz, Mavs, Spurs, Suns get it flush on the chin

SAN FRANCISCO—MONTA ELLIS scored 15 consecutive points for the Golden State Warriors in the fourth quarter to end the Phoenix Suns' eight-game winning streak with a 129-114 victory on Monday.

Ellis finished the game with 31 points and the hot-shooting Warriors got a season-high 32 points from Stephen Jackson for the home win in Oakland.

Baron Davis added 28 points and 10 rebounds for Golden State. Steve Nash led the Suns with 23 points and 13 assists and Shawn Marion added 10 points and 14 rebounds.

The Warriors shot 65.5 percent from the field in the first quarter, scoring 45 points to take an eight-point lead over the Suns.

"It (the 45-point quarter) kind of put us on our heels," Suns coach Mike D'Antoni told reporters. "We just couldn't catch up with the turnovers. Every time we turned it over, they seemed to hit a three. It just took the wind out of our sails."

Phoenix used an 8-2 run to end the third quarter to pull within 103-92 of Golden State.

The Suns narrowed the lead to nine with 10:14 to go in the game but then gave up nine consecutive points as Ellis began his streak.

In Dallas, Caron Butler scored 35 points and Antawn Jamison added 27 to help the Washington Wizards hand the Dallas Mavericks their first home loss of the NBA season and third straight overall, 110-98, on Monday.

Dallas, which started the season 6-0 at home, got 31 points, eight rebounds and six assists from Dirk Nowitzki. Josh Howard had 17 points and Juan Berea added 15 for Dallas.

In New York, Stephon Marbury scored a season-high 28 points and Zach Randolph added 25 points and 14 rebounds for New York, which held off the Utah Jazz, 113-109.

Jamal Crawford had 22 points for the Knicks, who have won two in a row following an eight-game skid. Randolph, who grabbed a huge offensive rebound in the final seconds, has eight double-doubles in the 10 games he has played this season.

In New Orleans, Marko Jaric scored 21 points and Minnesota got its second victory of the season, a 103-99 triumph over the New Orleans Hornets.

In Portland, Oregon, Hedo Turkoglu scored 21 points and Rashard Lewis had 20 and Orlando became the first NBA team to win 13 games this season with an 85-74 victory over the Trail Blazers.

In Sacramento, California, Beno Udrih scored a career-high 27 points against his former team and the Kings snapped San Antonio's five-game winning streak with a 112-99 rout of the Spurs.

Ron Artest added 20 points and Brad Miller had 17 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists. Udrih was 8-for-12 from the field and made all nine of his free throws.

In Los Angeles, Tracy McGrady scored 19 of his 36 points in the fourth quarter as Houston crushed the LA Clippers, 88-71. *AP, Reuters*

GAMES TODAY
(*Basketball TV*)
11:30 a.m.—Seattle vs. LA Lakers
(*replay @ 9 p.m.*)

Hapee win streak now at No. 9

By Jasmine W. Payo

HAPEE RAN ITS REMARKABLE WINNING streak to nine games even as Toyota Balintawak gained headway in the race for the last PBL V-Go Energy Drink Cup quarterfinal bonus.

The Complete Protectors repulsed San Mig Coffee, 85-81, in overtime at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum to match the nine-game winning record set by the 1998 Tanduay team despite the absence of head coach Jun Noel, who left for Cebu to attend to his sick sister.

Reed Juntilla shot seven of Hapee's first 13 points in overtime for an 83-76 lead after nailing the game-tying bucket with 5.9 seconds left in regulation.

Equally impressive were Mark Borboran, Larry Rodriguez and Fil-Am Gabe Norwood, who all posted double-double performances to help keep the Complete Protectors' run alive.

The Road Kings claimed the Pool B lead with a 5-4 record following a 78-66 triumph over the Mail and More Comets.

Erwin Sta. Maria fired 10 of his 20 markers in the final quarter to lead the Road Kings, who now just need to beat winless Bacchus on Thursday to clinch the twice-to-beat incentive in the quarterfinals.

San Mig Coffee claimed the first quarterfinal bonus last week and will clash against Pharex, which completed the quarterfinal cast by eliminating Bacchus in overtime, 83-79, in the first game.

Emer Oreta nailed a buzzer-beating triple that forged the extra period, while Francis Allera took charge in overtime after the Medics rallied from a nine-point deficit in the final two minutes of regulation.

The scores:

First Game

PHAREX 83—Oreta 20, Allera 20, Alfad 16, Bulawan 9, Co 9, Matias 8, Espiritu 1, Gerilla 0, De Guzman 0, Yambao 0.

BACCHUS 79—Cagoco 17, Mondragon 15, Llagas 12, Mendoza 9, Guevarra 6, Fampulme 6, Martinez 5, Dizon 4, Dela Cruz 3, Thiele 2, Raymundo 0, Williams 0.

Quarters: 16-21, 33-37, 46-56, 75-75 (reg), 83-79 (OT)

Second Game

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK 78—Sta. Maria 20, Caslo 17, Rodriguez 15, Aldave 10, Dedicatoria 5, Faundo 4, Guerrero 3, Villanueva 2, Sena 2, Cole 0, Alcaraz 0, Jaime 0.

MAIL AND MORE 66—Gregorio 14, Baracael 12, Santos 9, Arellano 8, Misa 7, David 7, Bonus 4, Bauzon 4, Ballesteros 1, Co 0, Masbang 0, White 0.

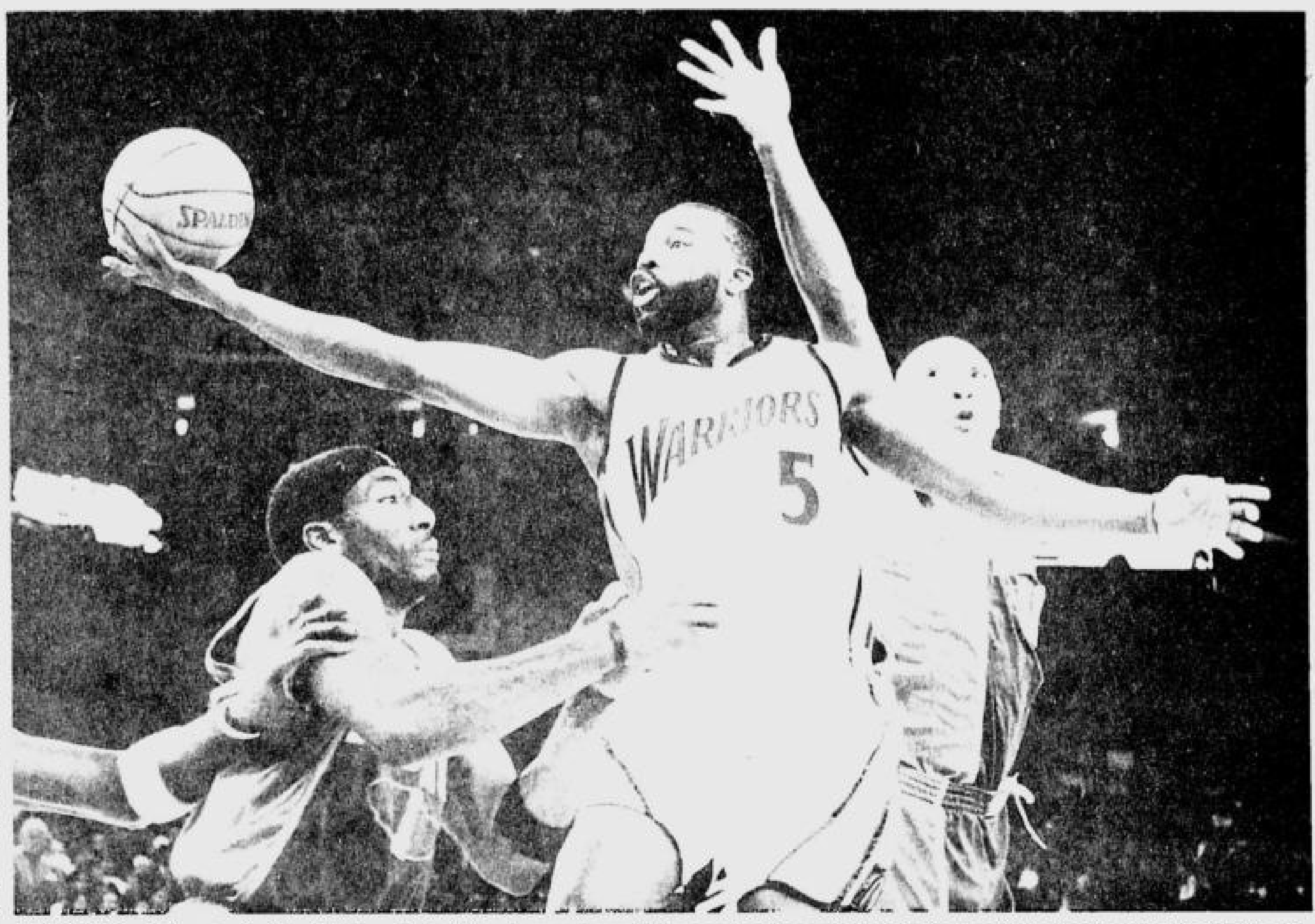
Quarters: 16-15, 30-31, 56-50, 78-66

Third Game

HAPEE 85—Borboran 19, Juntilla 19, Rodriguez 16, Norwood 15, Grijaldo 10, Mercado 4, Saguindel 2, Quinday 0, Daa 0, Hugnatan 0, Viray 0.

SAN MIG COFFEE 81—Custodio 20, Arao 15, Dela Peña 15, Magpayo 14, Saldua 14, Del Rosario 3, Luanzon 0, Sison 0, Dalafu 0, Bolocon 0, Pascual 0, Rañeses 0.

Quarters: 17-16, 30-29, 50-46, 70-70 (reg), 85-81 (OT)



BARON Davis (center) of the Golden State Warriors makes gliding past a Phoenix double team of Amare Stoudamire (left) and Shawn Marion look like an effortless job. AP

Meza, Soto raring to silence 'Boom Boom,' 'Bazooka'

THE HYPE MAY BE AS LOUD AS THEIR nicknames.

But Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and AJ "Bazooka" Banal will not find their road to glory to be easy as their foes vowed yesterday to silence their bids in the Payback fight card scheduled Dec. 2 at the Araneta Coliseum.

"He said he's going to win, by knockout or by decision," said the 25-year-old Meza's manager-interpreter Fernando Dominguez, referring to his ward.

Dominguez, Meza, Soto and the rest of the Mexican entourage arrived in the country yesterday, and following a brief rest, went straight to the Shakey's branch in United Nations Avenue to appear in the last session of the PSA Forum for the year 2007.

And for all the people to see, both Meza and Soto, notwithstanding their 15-hour flight, flexed their well-sculpted body and guaranteed a win in this Sunday's big-boxing offering.

"They're in great shape," said Dominguez in the forum sponsored by Shakey's and Pagcor. "In all, they've trained for about two months and sparred a total of 110 rounds."

Bautista (23-1, 17 KOs) will stake his World Boxing Organization (WBO) Inter-continental belt against Meza in a 12-round fight serving as the Filipino's comeback bout after losing to WBO super-bantamweight champion Daniel Ponce De Leon in August.

Banal (15-0-1 with 12 KOs) on the other, meets Soto in a similar 12-round slugfest for the WBO Youth super-flyweight title serving as the main supporting bout of the eight-fight boxing extravaganza put up by Third Force Promotions.

"Yes, Sunday is going to be payback time and I hope the Filipinos will be coming to support 'Boom Boom' and AJ Banal for this great boxing card," said former PBA commissioner Noli Eala of Third Force Promotions.

Meza, from Mexicali, Mexico, sports a 23-3 record, with 16 KOs while Soto is just as deadly with his 25-7-1 mark. Both were also trained by former world champion Edgar Cardenas.

HINES Ward (front) of the Pittsburgh Steelers gets stopped in his tracks by Michael Lehan (right) and Cameron Worrell of the Miami Dolphins while attempting to rush for more yards. AFP

Steelers hammer out mud-soaked triumph

PITTSBURGH—JEFF REED'S 24-yard field goal with 17 seconds remaining gave the Pittsburgh Steelers a 3-0 victory over the Miami Dolphins on a sodden home field on Monday.

It was the 11th successive loss for the Dolphins.

Ben Roethlisberger drove Pittsburgh into scoring range with passes of 21, six and 11 yards to Hines Ward and six yards to Willie Reid before Reed, who had missed a 45-yard field goal in the third quarter, converted the opportunity.

"It was ugly conditions, but it was a big win for us," Roethlisberger told reporters after the victory improved the AFC North Division-leading Steelers to 8-3.

"It was one of the worst conditions I've ever played on even though the last time I played Miami at Miami, it was in a hurricane."

The game was the longest to go scoreless since the Detroit Lions and New York Giants played to a 0-0 tie in 1943, while the last 3-0 result in the NFL was in December 1993 when the New York Jets held off the Washington Redskins.

The start was delayed for 45 minutes because of lightning and heavy rain and once play began, players slipped regularly, tearing up large chunks of the field.

With the wet conditions, the Steelers stuck to a running game with Willie Parker making 81 yards on 24 carries. *Reuters*

China sheds blood for Olympics—literally

BEIJING—YOUNG BEIJING RESIDENTS are bucking tradition and stepping forward to answer the latest call to duty by city officials—to donate blood for next year's Olympics.

City officials have warned Beijingers not to spit, litter or queue jump as part of efforts to put a gloss on Beijing's image for the Games, but the latest campaign has deeper implications.

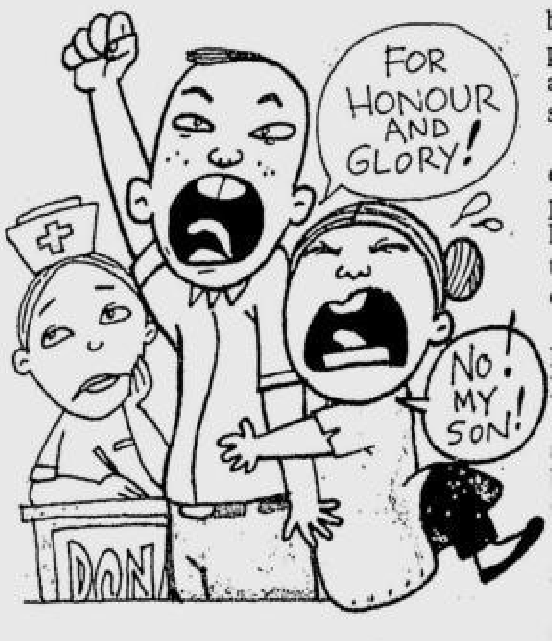
Normal Chinese blood supplies will simply be unable to cope in case of accidents or emergencies during the Games, according to city health officials.

"If anything happens, if there are any problems, we need to be ready," said Zhu Ruiquan, a department director at the Beijing Red Cross Blood Center.

China is chronically short of rhesus negative blood, a type certain to be common among the 500,000 foreigners expected here for the Aug. 8-24 Games.

Only 0.03 percent of ethnic Chinese have the type, against 15 percent for Caucasians, he said.

Demonstrating a change in traditional Chinese attitudes, young Beijingers are coming forward to help make up for the shortfall, according to health officials.


FOR HONOUR AND GLORY!
NO! MY SON!
DON

Most donors are aged 25-30 and, unlike their parents' generation, they feel a civic responsibility to donate blood and no superstition about parting with it, according to Xu Min, 30, a nurse who has been working for the Red Cross here for four years.

"Traditionally Chinese people see blood as very precious but younger people are different. A lot of people say they are giving blood for the Olympics," she said.

Chinese blood donors virtually did not exist 10 years ago, according to a contemporary US embassy report, and hospitals had to rely on a high-risk market in blood that was bought and sold with little medical supervision.

The process eventually triggered an HIV epidemic in the 1990s affecting millions of people.

Those days are gone, according to Zhu, as hundreds of donors queue up at 14 buses fitted out as mobile blood donations centers in downtown areas.

"No blood is sold anymore—the only incentive is honor and glory," he said.

However, Gao Yaojie, a retired doctor and veteran Chinese AIDS activist, disputed Zhu's claim, telling AFP in an interview that impoverished peasants still sold blood, even in Beijing.

"Farmers sell blood because they are too poor to make a living and pay school fees for their kids and so on," Gao told AFP in a phone call from Henan province, epicenter of the AIDS crisis of the 1990s. *AFP*

Big names spice up HK tennis tilt

HANTUCHOVA

HONG KONG—SLOVAK TENNIS star Daniela Hantuchova and Russia's Elena Dementieva will join a star-studded lineup at an annual Hong Kong tournament in January, organizers said Tuesday.

Hantuchova, the world's number nine, and Dementieva, ranked 11, will join other top-ranked female players including Russia's Maria Sharapova, the world's number five, and the number eight, American Venus Williams.

World number four Ana Ivanovic, from Serbia, and world number six Anna Chakvetadze, also from Russia, will also be playing at the JB Group Classic on Jan. 2-5.

"Apart from the Grand Slams you won't find other tournaments that can bring six of the world's top eleven to an event with a field of just eight," said Ian Wade, president of the Hong Kong Tennis Patrons' Association.

Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki and China's number two player Peng Shuai are also included.

Last year's final was won by now-retired Belgian Kim Clijsters, who beat Sharapova in the final. *AFP*

Filipino shooters fire blanks

From page A31

tiebreaker by veteran Than Than Saw of Burma (Myanmar) over Malaysian Mohd Taybi Nursuryani.

The Philippines did not really come out of Day 1 empty-handed with the highly regarded trap trio of Jethro Dionisio, Erwin Ang and Carlos Carag ending the first half of classification in third place.

Dionisio and Co., bronze medalists in the recent Asian Championships in Muntinlupa City, tallied 185 points after 75 shots to trail Singapore's 198 and Malaysia's 188 heading into the final 50 shots Wednesday and possibly the medal rounds at the Hua Mark Sports Complex, site of the 1998 Asian Games.

Ang lay seventh in individual trap with 63, while Dionisio and Carag, the former military man who opened up with 23 points to lead hostilities after the first 25 shots, were in joint eighth with 61 each.

The first team gold went to Malaysia as Nursuryani led her squad to 1,755 points in the 50m rifle prone for a comfortable 10-point win over Thailand, the logical favorites to unseat the Philippines in the overall race. Indonesia settled for the bronze with a 1,743 total.

"It just wasn't for me," said Medina, who finished fourth in the Manila edition in 2005 after losing the bronze in a tiebreak. "It was just such a disappointing day for me, and the rest of the team for that matter."

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

Medina, who said that her results here might force her to retire or try another event for the next SEAG, actually started out hot, shooting 98 points in her first string before going 97, 96, 98 to be in prime gold medal contention going into her last two strings.

Erlinawatti Chalid of Indonesia settled for the bronze after finishing just a point behind Saw, who will be in the books as the Games' first winner, and Nursuryani, who wasted a perfect start.

Each shooter has 10 shots in a string and each event has six rounds, making 600 the perfect score.

"We were really expecting Nikki (to at least land a medal for the Philippines)," said coach Bartolome Teyab. "But she got really unlucky (in her final two strings). Had she gone 99, 99, she would have won the gold medal. But that's the game."

Multiple SEAG gold medalist Emerito Concepcion, armed with a newer, more modern equipment, will lead the RP assault Wednesday when he campaigns in the 10m air pistol together with upstarts Alfonso Hermoso and Daryl Sandoval.

Concepcion, who wound up eighth in Manila using an old gun, will not only be aiming for the individual gold but will also seek to tow Hermoso and Sandoval to a medal in the team event.

"He (Concepcion) remains to be our top bet in the event," Teyab said.

Aguado, also a former SEAG champion, never really got going and practically bowed out after firing just 20 shots. She scored 90 and 91 in her first two strings, respectively, to finish with a 555 total.

That was a good 19 points behind the 574 of Vietnamese Thu Van Nguyen, who nipped home bet Tanyaporn Prucksakorn by a point for the top seeding in the medal rounds scheduled Wednesday.

Dan Thu Huong, who like Nguyen has seen action internationally in the past year, qualified as the third seed after firing 565. Only the top eight shooters advanced to fire 10 strings in medal round.

Gonzales, meanwhile, managed just 565 points, his strongest string coming in the fifth where he shot a 98. But the weight of shooting 92, 93, 95 and 92 took its toll as he failed to make the medal round scheduled late yesterday.

China experience for strongest-ever RP women's five

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—THE PHILIPPINE WOMEN'S basketball team left for China yesterday morning to test its souped-up roster for the last time before taking another crack at a first SEAG gold medal.

"We just can't find a good tune-up game here (in the Philippines)," said coach Fritz Gaston in a chance meeting with the INQUIRER at the Centennial Terminal. "This (Shanghai) trip will surely be a good experience for us and could help us greatly in our SEA Games bid."

Gaston, who took 14 players to China, said he will come up with the final 12-woman cut after Shanghai, where they will play a total of four games—three against collegiate teams and one versus a military squad—until Saturday.

They return to the Philippines on Sunday before leaving for Bangkok on Wednesday.

Fearsome lineup

For the first time in years, the Philippines will have a lineup that looks fearsome, easily its strongest ever, with 6-foot-3 former Meredith College standout Amira Issa manning the slot and 5-foot-10 Melissa Jacob as point guard.

"The only thing that this team lacks is cohesiveness," said Gaston, whose team showed its worth by finishing second in the Seaba tournament last month.

And while the Philippines is doing its best to prepare for the SEAG, Gaston said the Thais have done their homework and are priming up the Filipinas for the kill.

"The schedule (in the SEAG) favors them so much," Gaston said.

The Philippines takes on Thailand first before clashing with Malaysia next and lowly Singapore last in the single-round event where the elimination top-notcher is automatically declared the gold medal winner.

Never has the Philippines won the gold in the SEAG. It won a silver in 1995, also here in Thailand.

Likely scenario

"The scenario looks like this: If we beat them (Thailand), we go up against Malaysia *at yayariin na nila tayo 'dun* (and they'll finish us off)," Gaston said. "After that, they will beat Malaysia next because Singapore is their next opponent and they have a rest day after that."

Jacob is a former University of California-Irvine standout who was born in the Philippines and raised in the United States. Her parents hail from Pangasinan.

She is the nephew of Sammy Sison, a former University of Santo Tomas standout who played with Pido Jarencio in the UAAP in the early 1980s.

The other members of the team are Fil-Am Vicki Brick, Emilia Vega, Cassy Tioseco, Matsiko Matzuno, Christine Chia, Pipay Villanueva, Minerva Narcisa, Aurora Adriano, Pixie Valencia, Diana Jose, Ewon Arayi, Joanne Grajales and Fatima Tolentino.

HEAD coach Fritz Gaston in a huddle with members of the RP women's basketball team at a recent tournament.

Pinoy execs wary of hometown verdicts

THE PHILIPPINES IS PINNING ITS hopes on the measurable sports in the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand.

As for the subjective sports, everything is in doubt.

"The big question mark is the type of officiating we will face in Thailand," said Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco in yesterday's PSA Forum at Shakey's UN Avenue

"In measurable sports (such as swimming and athletics), I think we will do very well. But in subjective sports (like boxing and taekwondo) we have to see about the officiating."

"We do not differ with the way the POC looks at things," said Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez. "But we're looking forward to an excellent performance by our athletes."

Thailand is said to be notorious for hometown decisions, and Cojuancgo said the decision of Thai organizers to limit foreign countries to one referee each in taekwondo could be an early indication of how things will be decided.

In previous stagings of the SEAG, hosts have allowed other countries to bring in three referees each for the competitions. This time, the Thais said they will rely more on "neutral referees."

But whatever comes out of the officiating, Cojuangco and Ramirez said the 596 Filipino athletes competing in Thailand are raring to do battle.

"Our athletes are out to sustain their performance in the 2005 SEA Games and the 2006 Asian Games," said Ramirez. "It has created a big impact on our athletes."

For the first time in SEA Games history, the Philippines, as host, won the overall championship two years ago. And in the Doha Asian Games, it won four gold medals for its best finish in more than 40 years. *With a report from June Navarro*

KING Bhumibol Adulyadej

SEAG overall race decided in five-day span

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—THE FIVE-DAY PERIOD STARTING DEC. 7 will be crucial for the Philippines and all others aspiring to win the overall championship of the 24th Southeast Asian Games to be held in this traffic-congested city and two other provinces.

A clear picture of which country will lord it over in the overall race will emerge by Dec. 11 with 77 of the 475 gold medals at stake already contested by then.

How the Philippines performs in these medal-rich events will decide the Filipinos' chances of retaining the overall championship.

The formal opening, which is expected to be grandiose in scale since it will come a day after the King of Thailand celebrates his 80th birthday, won't be held until Dec. 6.

But a total of 40 gold medals would have been disputed before that with shooting, which opened yesterday, staking a total of 26 until Saturday.

The first four of 24 gymnastics golds and two of seven table tennis titles will be disputed on Dec. 5.

* * *

King Bhumibol Adulyadej will celebrate his 80th birthday on Dec. 5, and Thais are making sure every athlete, spectator and reporter won't miss this fact.

The main stadium in Nakhonratchisama province, about a four-hour drive from this city, is aptly named "Main Stadium, His Majesty the King's 80th Birth Anniversary Stadium (5th Dec. 2007)."

With a seating capacity of 20,000, the stadium will be the venue of the opening and closing rites, as well as competitions in athletics and football.

The King is so loved here that Thais wear yellow T-shirts with the emblem of the throne emblazoned on the left side of the chest as day-to-day apparels.

* * *

Hotels in Nakhonratchasima have never had it so good. Rooms in this Thai province is fully booked until Dec. 17, even suites that go for 9,100 baht (about P14,700) a night.

Journalists from the Philippines have been left scampering for accommodations.

On the way to Bangkok from the airport, one travel agent said that journalists should refrain from riding taxis in doing about their jobs, since drivers will prey on poor Filipino deadline-beaters by taking long routes or charging fixed, exorbitant fares.

Twin bids at redemption and confirmation

TWO FILIPINO BOXERS FIGURE IN bouts on Sunday which, needless to say, they cannot afford to lose.

There's the vastly popular Boom Boom Bautista who undergoes a much-needed check-up after figuring in a demoralizing first-round crash in Sacramento, California, as chief warrior of the RP team in the World Cup of Boxing.

Bautista clashes with Mexican Antonio Meza at the Araneta Coliseum.

Not in the same card, but around the same time, Filipino International Boxing Federation (IBF) flyweight champion Nonito Donaire seeks a confirmatory follow-up to his fifth-round demolition of Vic Darchinyan in the first defense of his 112-pound crown.

* * *

There should be no blinking for Bautista, who was stopped cold on his shaky tracks by Mexican Daniel Ponce de Leon in Sacramento when the RP team suffered its lone loss against Mexico in the World Cup.

There were late reports, culled from a deeper detailed review of Meza's record, which tend to show the Mexican may not be as good as advertised.

But whether or not Meza would prove no better than all the assorted patsies Bautista had flattened in his prodigious but otherwise empty rise to stardom, there's no turning back now.

* * *

At least fans, expected to come running to Araneta on Sunday, could always have a fallback bout when AJ Banal tries to extend his unblemished victory run against another Mexican. RP bantamweight champ Michael Domingo, another sensation at the World Cup, sees action in the same card.

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

Anyway, as far as Donaire is concerned, there were conflicting reports on his stature and capability.

His fifth-round one-punch stoppage of Darchinyan was both brilliant and stunning but there next came claims it could be nothing more than a lucky punch.

Worse, there were contentions the knockout was plainly a fluke.

* * *

Well, no matter what, it's pure and clear Donaire is a legit world title-holder.

He did not have to step over the silly heads of patsies lined up to embellish his career.

He has also conducted himself like a true gentleman, sharp, humble and articulate, outside the ring.

He was a walking advertisement of a lovable Filipino.

Of course, it won't be easy, this first title defense, but Donaire knows whereof he stands.

He need not be told that his resounding victory over Darchinyan did serve only as his baptism.

On Sunday, in full view of his countrymen, thanks to the magic of the satellite, Donaire goes for a confirmatory victory against Luis Maldonado in Connecticut.

* * *

Has Boom Boom Bautista matured instantly after that unsettling setback against Ponce De Leon?

Can Donaire handle the monumental task of affirming his stardom?

Two Filipinos see action in separate bouts, thousand of miles apart, on Sunday.

If fate would grant a win to only one of the two, who between Bautista and Donaire would you choose?

Would you pick the more popular over the worthier warrior?

Did they have to rush Bautista in a blind bid to redeem himself and regain everything he lost when he suffered an instant blackout in his first fight against a truly classy opponent?

Well, the best that can be said here is that Bautista's fight on Sunday, whether against another patsy or a certified warrior, should be nothing more than a check-up.

The full-scale repair job could follow much later, one step at a time.

RP jin Rivero gets going first

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HO CHI MINH CITY—MARY ANTOINETTE RIVERO GETS THE FIRST CRACK among the three jins bidding for slots to the Beijing Olympics when she fights in the daunting -67kg class of the Asian qualifying event here Thursday.

The Philippines has no entry in the inaugural action on Wednesday, which will feature the female -49kg and male -58kg, the same weight class where Tshomlee Go qualified during September's World tournament held in Manchester, England.

But the third and last day on Friday will be D-day for two more jins, Alexander Briones and Kristine Elaine Alora, who will see action in the male -80kg and female -57kg categories, respectively.

The three Filipinos need to win at least the bronze medal to earn the right to compete next year in the Olympics, where taekwondo is one of the country's bright hopes to end the country's gold medal drought.

"I have started praying for this since last year," said the 19-year-old Rivero after sweating it out with the rest of the team at the spanking Phu Tho indoor stadium.

She missed an outright trip to Beijing in Manchester after a questionable sudden-death loss to a Croatian. She had earlier dispatched with relative ease her foes from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ukraine.

This weekend, she goes up against top bets from Asian powerhouses like Chinese Taipei, Thailand and host Vietnam.

Meanwhile, the brawny, 6-foot Briones, 23, fights Friday in the third weight category where entries from Canada, United States and Italy had earlier qualified.

He also blew his chance in the Worlds when he ran smack against a Briton in the first round. This time, he will have to put up against the region's best including those from Iran and Kazakhstan.

Alora, 18, will try to improve on a bronze medal here last year during the world junior championships.

Drawing of lots was set later Tuesday followed by a meeting of team officials and weigh-in of jins fighting on Wednesday.

RIVERO: Praying since last year PDI PHOTO

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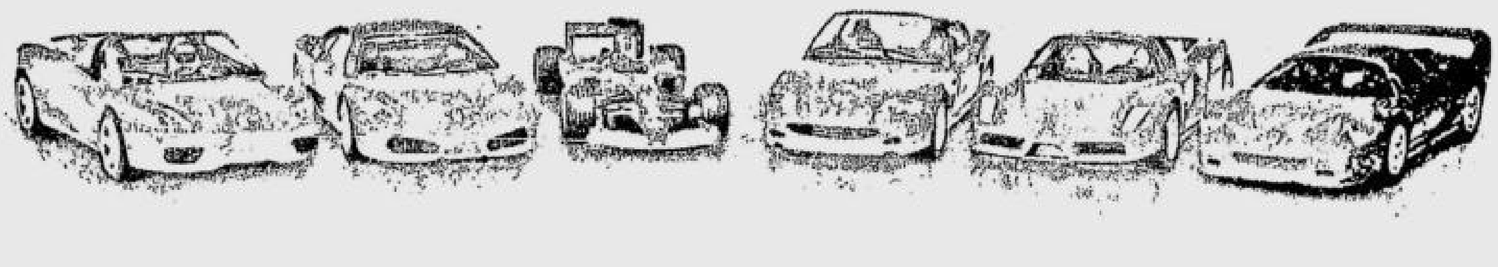

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Made to move

Intramuros, Isabela golfers keep Fil-Am lead

BAGUIO CITY—NOT EVEN A STRONG earthquake could stop the march of Club Intramuros and Isabela Golf Club to the lead in their respective Senior B divisions yesterday in the 58th Fil-Am Golf Invitational.

Club Intramuros made 94 points at the Camp John Hay golf course for 293 points and increased its lead by 14 points over T&T Golfers in the Fil B division.

Isabela GC I, meanwhile, assembled 78 points at the shorter Baguio Country Club course to maintain its 12-point lead over Square & Compass Golf Foundation in Am B.

Paulino Petralba and Rodrigo Villanueva shot 26 and 25 points, respectively to lead the Manila-based CI squad while Expedito Gumiran topscored with 26 points for Isabela as the tournament resumed after rains wiped out Monday's play.

Rural Bankers Golf Association was third spot in Fil B with 244 after an 85 while host BCC stood at 242 after an 85 in the event backed by Mazda, Club Cart, Wilson Sports, Royal Caribbean, Eva Airways, El Nido Resorts and My Phone.

While an intensity 6 earthquake which rocked the city at 12:29 p.m. sent nervous people out of their homes and offices here, players went about with their business.

In the Fil F category, Dutch Mill Yogurt Drink forged ahead after a day-best 106 at the CJH course for 251 points and an 11-point lead over early leader Guam Friendship GC. Isabela Club was third with 238 after an 86.

Square & Compass fired 51 points in the Am G section for a two-round total of 100 and a two-shot advantage over Macabud, which had a 47, while Isabela GC (Cauayan) held third spot with 89 in a tie with Sustagen Executives.

Tonlits goes three up at Sherwood

NOMURA CUP VETERAN TONLITS Asistio overcame the swirling winds with a two-over-par 74 to open a three-stroke lead in the championship division of the Pilipinas Amateur Tour's fifth leg Monday at the Sherwood Hills Golf and Country Club in Trece Martires, Cavite.

Asistio handled the conditions at the Jack Nicklaus-designed course masterfully and moved ahead of Erwin Vinluan and Chun Il Jin, who both returned 77s. Two other Korean teeners, Koo Jae Min and Kang Byung Hoon, were four shots back at 78.

Nico Monsalve and Larry Tojino were tied for the lead in Class A, Jeric Ang was on top in Class B, Anton Aguas paced Class D and Bueno Macatangay led Class D in the 36-hole competition presented by Samsung Electronics Philippines Inc.

In the ladies division, Kwon Ye Seul, the former National Tournament of Club Champions winner, and Grace Superal, mother of junior aces Crystal, Wolen and Princess, paced their respective classes.

Kwon assembled a 73 to lead Regina de Guzman, who is set to join the SEA Games campaign in Thailand next month, by two strokes with Matet Salivio another stroke behind at 75 in Class A.

Superal carded a 77 to go up by three over another jungolfer, Mara Monsalve in Class B.

IN THIS ISSUE

RP businesses urged to invest in Vietnam /B5
Coal demand expected to rise in '08 /B6

Website: www.inquirer.net/business

BUSINESS

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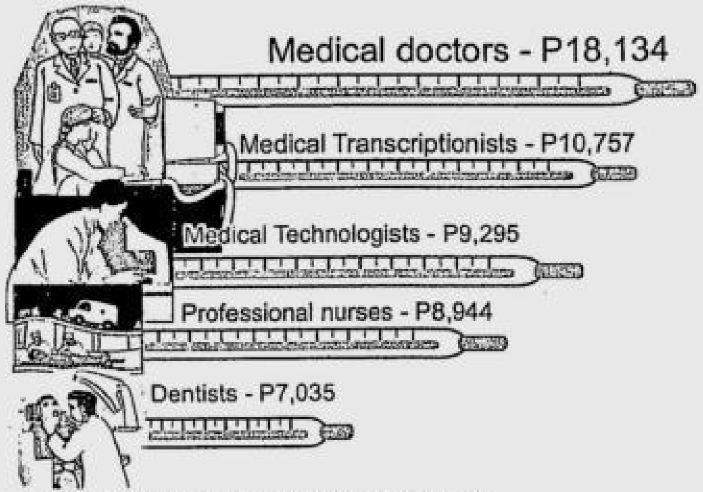
Imports jumped 8.9% to $4.74B in Sept.

INQUIRER MONITOR
Figures that matter in our nation's life

Monthly wage rates in medical, dental and other health jobs (August 2006)

After doctors, medical transcriptionists have the higher average monthly wage rates.



Wage rates include basic pay and guaranteed cash allowances.
Basic pay refers to pay for regular working time; excludes overtime pay, commissions, tips, payment in kind, etc.
Allowances refer to living allowances; excludes reimbursement for travel, bonuses, etc.

Source: Occupational Wages Survey 2006
Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics
Kate Pedroso Inquirer Research

Surge due to record crude prices

By Michelle V. Remo

MERCHANDISE IMPORTS CLIMBED 8.9 PERCENT TO $4.74 BILlion in September from a year ago partly due to the increase in global oil prices that pushed the value of imported mineral fuels, lubricants and related products.

The imports growth in September accelerated from the 2.1-percent year-on-year rise in August, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

Latest imports figure brought the total for the first nine months to $40.08 billion, up 4.4 percent from that of the same period last year.

With exports at $37.2 billion from January to September, the country's balance of trade for the period stood at a deficit of $2.88 billion.

The NSO said the commodity group comprising mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials recorded the fastest year-on-year growth of 40.2 percent in September. The growth translated to $636.87 million worth of imports of these products for September.

Other big contributors to import growth during the month were: organic and inorganic chemicals (up 22.4 percent to $104.11 million); plastics (up 4.2 percent to $88.42 million); and electronics (up 3.4 percent to $2.348 billion).

Electronics accounted for the biggest share of the total import bill at 49.5 percent. Most of the country's electronics imports are raw materials that are transformed into intermediate goods for exports. The Philippines' electronics exports are then transformed into consumer electronics such as personal computers, music players and cellular phones.

Jesus Arranza, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries, said the growth in imports of mineral fuels, lubri-

IMPORTS/ B4

INDICATORS

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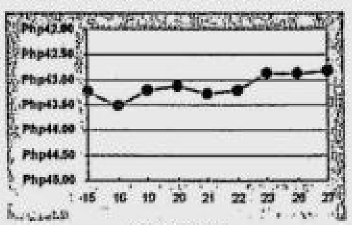


NOVEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

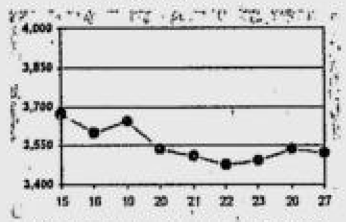
P 42.805 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 27, 2007

¥ 108.14 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 27, 2007

GOLD: $824.60-825.10
per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 26, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
NOVEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stock index dips on Wall Street losses

SHARE PRICES FELL MILDLY YESTERday after a two-day rebound, taking a cue from Wall Street losses overnight but with retreat limited by bargain-hunters.

The Philippine Stock Exchange Index shed 13.1 points or 0.4 percent, at 3,524.19.

"The market is going through a medium-term consolidation," said Summit Securities president Harry Liu of recent market swings. Shares may advance in the next two trading days before the Nov. 30 holiday as fund managers improve their portfolios before the month's end, he added.

Conglomerate Ayala Corp. fell 2.6 percent to P555 after rising 2.7 percent on

STOCK/ B3

Exporters group push ₱47:$1 exchange rate

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE EXPORTERS CONFEDERation yesterday said the government should finally intervene to stop the continued appreciation of the peso amid fresh forecasts showing the currency would further strengthen in the coming years.

Philexport president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. said in an interview that there was still a lot that the government could do to address the trend that adversely affects families of overseas Filipino workers and those whose livelihood depend on exports.

"The government can choose to move and bring and peg the exchange rate to P47 to the dollar," Ortiz-Luis said. "It has always been saying that the steady uptrend is good for Filipinos, but nobody is benefiting from this except the government and smugglers."

ORTIZ-LUIS

He added that the economy could afford a 10-percent depreciation of the peso to 47:$1, which would result to a marginal increase in inflation of 1.2 percent.

"This is based on studies and statements made by government agencies themselves, including the Philippine Institute of Development Studies, the University of the Philippines' School of Economics the

EXPORTERS/ B3

3rd quarter growth estimated at 6.7%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY was estimated to have expanded at a slower 6.7 percent year-on-year in the third quarter from 7.5 percent in the second quarter on weaker export growth, a Citigroup economist projected.

But the American banking giant's forecast was near the higher end of the 6.1-7.1 percent growth estimate by the National Economic and Development Authority for the period.

Ahead of the government's release of the quarterly economic report card tomorrow, Citigroup also projected a nine-month growth in Philippine gross domestic product (GDP) of 7.1 percent from a year ago.

In a commentary dated Nov. 23, Citigroup economist for the Philippines Jun Trinidad said domestic demand would likely remain upbeat, driven by fiscal spending for infrastructure and operations. On the supply side, he said services would continue to lead economic growth while farm output, finally recovering from the impact of a prolonged dry spell, would provide additional upside to domestic expansion.

GDP refers to the total amount of goods produced by the domestic economy in a given period.

"We suspect that industrial output, largely because of moderate manufacturing production growth, would probably

3RD QUARTER/ B4

Malaysian to put up hotel in Makati

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MALAYSIAN PROPerty firm IGB Corp. Berhad is entering the busy Makati business district hotel market with the development of a P750-million business class hotel at the corner of Makati and Kalayaan avenues.

Following a groundbreaking ceremony yesterday on the site, officials said the new hotel would consist of 415 rooms on an 827-square-meter lot that will stand 29 stories tall.

The hotel will be developed by St. Giles Hotel Manila Inc., a local company put-up by IGB Corp. for its hotel investment in the Philippines. Management of the hotel will be undertaken by Cititel Hotel Management (CHM), the hotel management arm of IGB Corp.

"Makati is very vibrant. Tourist growth will continue, specially the

MALAYSIAN/ B3

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Gotianun holding firm posts 122% profit jump

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

FILINVEST DEVELOPMENT CORP., the holding firm of the Gotianun family, reported a 122-percent increase in its net income for the first nine months to P3.9 billion from P1.76 billion a year ago.

In a financial report filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), FDC said the growth was largely due to a one-time gain of P2.4 billion from the sale of shares in property unit Filinvest Land Inc. (FLI).

FLI offered an additional 3.7 billion shares last February, raising about $204 million for both the primary and secondary offerings. The exercise raised additional funds for FLI's P5-billion capital expenditure budget set for this year.

FDC's total net revenues grew to P4.96 billion during the January-to-September period from P4.04 billion last year.

Out of total net revenues, real estate operations contributed P3.4 billion, higher by 8 percent from P3.1 billion in the same period last year. This was mainly a result of higher sales of lots, condominium and housing units and club shares.

Mall and rental revenues improved to P862 million from P744.7 million in 2006, or an increase of 16 percent, due to the escalation of rental rates at the PBCom Tower in Makati and improved tenant occupancy.

On the other hand, net revenue from banking operations went up by 47 percent to P1.32 billion from P902 million in 2006, driven by interest income due to the growth in automobile and credit card loans.

Meantime, a total of P250.5 million was contributed by the company's sugar business to total net revenues after FDC bought Pacific Sugar Holdings Corp. from ALG Holdings Corp., the private holding firm of property magnate Andrew Gotianun.

Pacific Sugar wholly owns and controls three subsidiaries—Davao Sugar Central Co. Inc., Cotabato Sugar Central Co. Inc. and High Yield Sugar Farms Corp. Dasuceco owns and operates a raw sugar mill and a refinery in Hagonoy, Davao del Sur, while Cosuceco owns and operates a raw sugar mill in Matalam, North Cotabato. HYSFC is engaged in sugar cane planting in Mindanao.

The acquisition allowed FDC to tap into the productive sugar industry and provided opportunities to venture into allied businesses such as alternative fuel production.

Trans-Asia starts rights offering

TRANS-ASIA OIL and Energy Development Corp., the power sector investment arm of the Phinma group, starts its 1-for-2 stock rights offer today to raise roughly P608 million.

In a prospectus filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange, Trans-Asia said its offer period would end on Dec. 11.

The stock rights offer consists of 552 million shares at P1.10 each.

Under the terms of the offer, shareholders holding two common shares are entitled to get one new common share.

Trans-Asia said the proceeds of the stock rights offering would be used to finance the plant expansion of its subsidiary, CIP (Carmelray Industrial Park) II Power Corp. (CIPP) and petroleum and mineral exploration projects.

CIPP operates a 21-megawatt power plant in Calamba, Laguna, and supplies electricity to 44 industrial users at the Carmelray Industrial Park.

The power plant has reached its peak load capacity of 14 MW. CIPP anticipates electricity demand in the economic zone to increase as locators jack up demand. To meet this expected growth, CIPP plans to increase its power generation capacity by 15 MW by installing additional power-generating sets. The estimated cost of the additional capacity is P378 million.

For its petroleum exploration projects, Trans-Asia is also a co-contractor in four petroleum service contracts with the Philippine government, some of which are in eastern Visayas and western Palawan.

On mineral exploration, Trans-Asia is participating in the possible reopening of a copper-gold mine in the Cordillera Administrative Region where an application for an exploration permit is pending. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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ePerformax posts 34% profit jump

CALL CENTER OPerator ePerformax International Inc. posted a net income of P174.54 million for the first nine months of the year, up 34 percent from P129.81 million for the same period last year.

In a statement, the company said service fees grew 25 percent from January to September to P1.19 billion.

As of Sept. 30, ePerformax has 2,196 agents at its two contact center facilities in Manila and Cebu. The company provides customer service, technical support, quality assessment call monitoring, data collection and verification for six major American companies.

ePerformax is considering a public offering of its shares in 2008 to raise P3.3 billion for its expansion program.

BDO Capital and Investment Corp. has been tapped as issue manager and lead underwriter for the planned offering.

ePerformax president Teresa Hartsaw attributed the strong showing of the company to the improving efficiency in operations over the past 3 years.

"The company has focused on delivering higher and higher performance results for its clients. This has resulted in increased business operations that have contributed greatly to improved operational efficiencies and exemplary growth," Hartsaw said in a statement. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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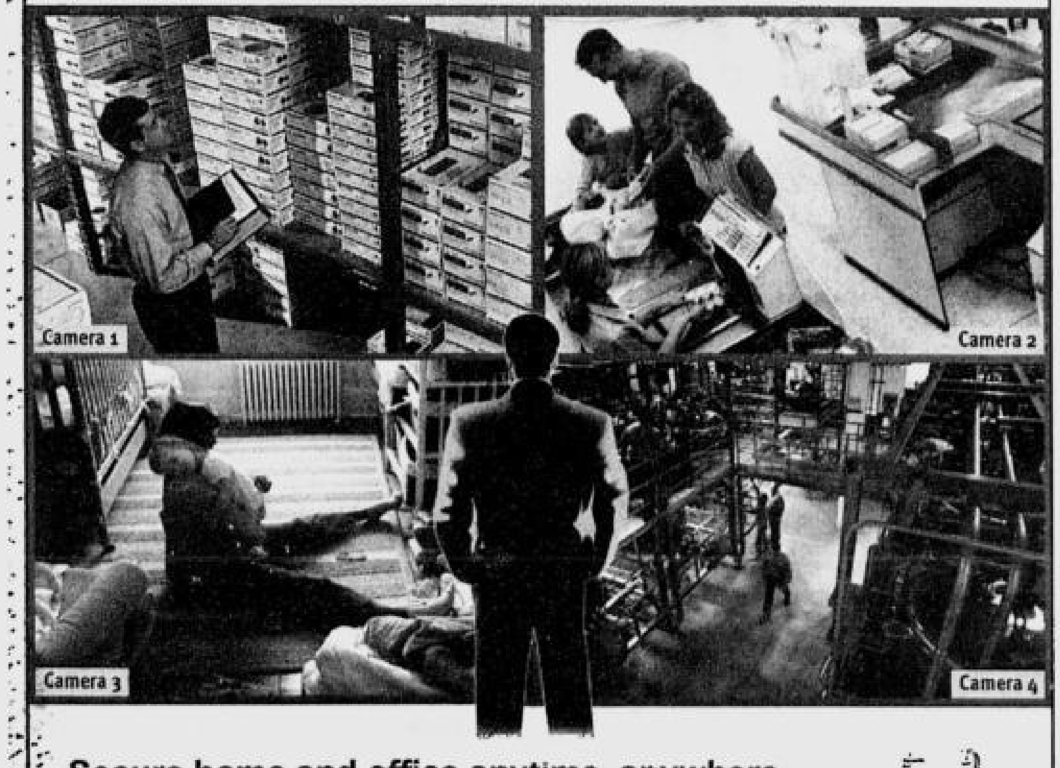

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 27, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8	8	8	8	1,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	52	52.5	52	52.5	668,600
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	61	61.5	61	61.5	1,072,400
748	544	China Banking Corp.	665	665	660	665	2,070
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	300
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	140,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	54	54.5	53.5	54.5	2,413,500
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	42.5	42.5	41.5	41.5	403,500
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	60	60.5	60	60.5	1,500
39.57	20	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23	23.75	23	23.5	251,400
90	61	Security Bank Corp.	68	68	68	68	1,900
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	43.5	43.5	43	43.5	175,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	25,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.94	1.96	506,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.25	11.25	10.75	11	515,600
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.92	1.02	0.92	1.02	90,000
42.5	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	42	42	2,000
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	5	5.1	5	5	791,000
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	2.95	3	2.9	2.95	3,600,000
3.1	1.32	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2,000
1,390.00	260	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	1,050.00	1,050.00	1,050.00	1,050.00	60,500
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	8,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	4,159,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	59.5	59.5	57.5	57.5	1,046,200
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	60	63	59.5	63	1,861,400
17.5	6.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.5	2,083,900
105.45	27.73	Manila Electric Company	68.5	69.5	68	69.5	1,340,600
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	7	7	6.8	6.9	9,962,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	1,329,000
14.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7	7	7	7	1,000
2.04	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.26	1.3	2,636,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.9	5	4.9	5	1,062,000
2.32	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.5	1.54	352,000
2.32	1.08	CADP Group Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	5,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	23	23	102,700
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	48	48.5	47.5	48	763,100
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	6,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.69	320,000
3.3	2.08	Roxas Holdings	2.75	2.75	2.6	2.7	255,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. A	44	45.5	43.5	45.5	2,107,800
88	43	San Miguel Corp. B	46	46.5	45.5	46.5	452,500
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	14	14.25	14	14	5,046,300
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp.	4.5	4.65	4.5	4.65	528,000
7	3.4	Republic Cement Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.25	4.3	285,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.97	0.95	0.97	6,730,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp	9.7	9.8	9.6	9.8	689,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	207,000
2.4	1.31	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	50,000
1.34	0.82	Interphil Laboratories Inc. A	1	1	1	1	50,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	3,290,000
9	6.7	Splash Corp	7.4	7.4	6.7	7.2	1,888,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Hldg Corp. - Phil. Deposit Receipts	34	34	34	34	90,000
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	200,000
0.185	0.0525	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.125	0.115	0.12	53,270,000
1.28	0.29	APC Group Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.6	690,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	5,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.7	6,045,000
0.021	0.0095	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	14,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	15,303,000
1.38	0.59	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.73	60,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.4	2.46	2.4	2.46	2,505,000
645	397.92	Ayala Corp.	565	565	555	555	103,760
15.25	7.39	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	1,600
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.75	8,053,000
12	5	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.25	1,089,000
8	3.15	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.5	280,000
14.5	8.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	223,700
5.9	0.61	Jollivilla Holdings Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	20,000
7	1.42	Lodestar Investment Hldgs Corp.	7	7	7	7	48,000
0.8	0.23	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.4	2,917,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	10,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. A	0.205	0.22	0.205	0.22	123,100,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	2,020,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	340	347.5	337.5	345	41,940
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	1,080,000
1.06	0.61	Solid Group Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	10,000
2	0.9	South China Resources Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	100,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.31	0.31	0.29	0.31	2,990,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	90,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Company Inc.	1.54	1.6	1.54	1.6	959,000
1.06	0.4	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	90,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.5	14,409,200
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	566,000
4.7	3.05	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	30,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	70,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.72	11,510,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	13,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.23	5,320,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.97	0.99	0.97	0.99	3,460,000
2.44	1.28	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.5	1.52	1.48	1.5	37,947,000
4.6	1.86	Megaworld Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.8	3.85	11,803,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.85	3.9	875,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp. - Warrants	2.05	2.8	2.6	2.8	773,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.43	710,000
9.2	1.32	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4	4.3	4	4.3	25,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	2,502,900
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.	4	4	3.95	3.95	71,000
13.5	7.6	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.5	4,211,500
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	50,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	2	2	1.92	2	158,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	100,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.27	0.24	0.26	2,290,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Landscapes Inc	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	7,092,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33.5	34	33.5	34	109,600
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.8	1,393,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.6	708,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,495.00	1,500.00	1,480.00	1,500.00	137,070
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,000.00	3,015.00	3,000.00	3,010.00	61,260
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp	6.9	7	6.9	7	2,634,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	3,390,000
15.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	14.5	14.5	13.5	14	274,600
11.5	2.5	IPVG Corp.	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.6	184,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.039	0.039	0.038	0.039	1,300,000
2.9	1.1	Ionics Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	6,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.17	1,500,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	5,400,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.55	425,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	400,000
42.5	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc	41	41.5	41	41.5	552,900
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	51,000
1.16	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1	1.02	1	1	4,428,000
1.2	0.54	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.82	0.83	0.82	0.83	2,780,000
		EDUCATION					
950	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	810	810	810	810	1,460
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	25,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	8,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11	11	11	11	195,700
30	6.4	Paxys Inc.	7	7	6.8	6.9	1,308,000
472.5	390	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc	430	457.5	430	450	612,730
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	176,000,000
7	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.1	7	6.1	6.9	5,192,000
7.3	3.65	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	6.4	7.3	6.4	7.1	3,400,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	497,800
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. A	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	15,000
12.75	1.96	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9.7	9.7	9	9.3	252,000
3.1	0.6	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.78	1.86	1.74	1.86	50,214,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.49	0.51	0.48	0.51	159,420,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.53	127,570,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.028	169,500,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.031	406,400,000
30	3.6	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	19	20.25	19	20	1,914,300
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	180,800,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp. - Warrants	0.009	0.0095	0.009	0.0095	13,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.7	9.8	9.6	9.7	7,155,000
49	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	42	43.5	42	43.5	1,240,000
1.36	0.55	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.69	850,000
1.8	0.85	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	1,151,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	7,090,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	60,700,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.025	0.026	0.025	0.025	47,000,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.8	10	9.8	9.9	26,000
0.032	0.0095	The Philodrill Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.027	235,700,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	851.84	DOWN	6.90	10,731,470	348,188,495.00
Industrial	4,059.33	UP	0.85	6,048,677,500	59,087,726,161.16
Holding Firms	1,999.34	DOWN	29.63	239,261,000	301,631,560.00
Property	1,582.84	DOWN	11.32	104,292,600	473,905,500.00
Service	1,802.76	UP	5.63	26,492,320	729,731,025.00
Mining & Oil	8,330.66	DOWN	56.70	1,642,086,100	500,093,510.00
All Shares Index	2,148.27	DOWN	8.58		
PSEI	3,524.19	DOWN	13.10		
		GRAND TOTALS		8,071,540,990	61,441,276,251.16

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Exporters group ...

From page B1

Bangko Sentral and even (the private sector) University of Asia and the Pacific," Ortiz-Luis said.

Also, he said another step the government could take was to prepay more foreign loans.

"They (economic managers) have to weigh the benefits they enjoy against the interest of more than half our population who earn in dollars or, together with the manufacturing sector, some 70 percent of the economy," the Philexport president said.

He added that many export businesses have closed shop since the peso has appreciated by 30 percent from 56 to the dollar, although he could not say how many firms or workers were affected.

"To address the clamor of these sectors, the government has so far made efforts that are too little and too late," Ortiz-Luis said. "It has left the management (of the foreign exchange rate) to fund managers and portfolio investments."

"It is time to act and peg the exchange rate to a more manageable level," he said. "We should not be averse to this because it is being done in other countries, including China."

Stock ...

From page B1

Monday. Its unit, property developer Ayala Land Inc., finished 0.8 percent off at P61.50.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. ended 0.17-percent higher at P3,010 while rival Globe Telecom Inc. finished 1.4-percent up at P1,500.

Call center provider eTelecare Global Solutions Inc. shares fell 4.8 percent at P450. *AP*

Malaysian ...

From page B1

business travelers market," said Seng Yong Chua, president of St. Giles Hotel Manila.

"The occupancy rate in Makati is very healthy. The St. Giles brand is an existing United Kingdom (hotel) brand (of the IGB Group)," CHM managing director Dato Eric Lim said.

The hotel will feature conference and function rooms and amenities like a pool and restaurants.

Construction will start in January and completion is targeted by December 2009.

IGB Corp. owns the Renaissance and the Boulevard hotels in Kuala Lumpur, the New World Saigon in Vietnam, the Pangkor Island Beach Resort and Cititel hotels in Malaysia and the MiCasa hotel apartments in Myanmar.

In Europe, IGB owns two hotels under the St. Giles brand in London and Heathrow, two of the United Kingdom's biggest three-star hotels.

Rate of 25-year Treasury bonds slide to 8.5%

With revenue up, gov't may cancel remaining auctions

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S LONGEST dated security, the 25-year Treasury bonds, yesterday fetched a lower yield, leading treasury officials to conclude that investors have regained their confidence on the country's fiscal climate.

The new rate for the long-term debt instrument yesterday hit 8.5 percent, falling by 87.5 basis points from the 9.375 percent recorded for the 25-year bonds' previous auction in October last year.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, who is also acting national treasurer, said the sale of the government's remaining 60-percent stake in PNOC-Energy Development Corp., which generated P58.5 billion, had strengthened the state's capability to service debts.

"Perhaps, bond investors realized the strong cash position of the government, with the revenue inflow from the sale of PNOC-EDC," Tan said in a briefing after yesterday's bond auction.

There were P19.036 billion worth of bids for bonds—more than double the P7-billion debt offering of the government. Treasury officials only accepted P7 billion worth of bids, as provided under the borrowing program.

According to Tan, the Bureau of the Treasury is now considering whether to cancel the two remaining auctions of government securities for the year. He said the revenue raised from the sale of PNOC-EDC could be enough to cover the government's remaining expenditure requirements for the year.

The government was originally scheduled to borrow P6 billion through the sale of Treasury bills, and another P7 billion from the sale of 7-year bonds in December.

Of the total amount generated from the sale of PNOC-EDC, P47 billion will go to the national government. The balance will go to the mother company, PNOC, which will shoulder sale-related costs, including payment to its financial adviser.

The PNOC-EDC sale is the biggest privatization deal in 2007. Earlier in the year, the government raised P25.2 billion from the sale of its 46-percent stake in Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp., P1.2 billion from the sale of the old Iloilo airport property, and P998 million from the sale of its minority stake in Philippine National Bank.

The government is selling state-owned assets which, it says, may be better run by the private sector. Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had said that the rationale behind this is to improve the delivery of services to the public and to ease the government's financial burden in running companies.

The revenues generated from this year's privatization program allowed the government to stay on track of its deficit-reduction goal this year despite shortfalls in tax collection.

The government hopes to cap the deficit at P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion. This is in line with the government's goal to balance the budget by next year.

The government aims to sell more assets next year, including its shares in San Miguel Corp. and Manila Electric Co., and the Food Terminals Inc. property in Taguig.

Under the 2008 fiscal program, the government is supposed to raise P29.3 billion from privatization.

But according to DOF estimates, the sale of SMC shares alone may already yield P47 billion.

Nokia Siemens expects 50M Filipinos to go online by 2015

By Riza T. Olchondra

IT WAS A WELCOME PIECE of news for Nokia Siemens when it heard that the government had decided to engage private telecommunications firms in undertaking the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

According to the telecommunications network, the decision will help the economy grow as the broadband market is expected to serve 50 million Filipinos by 2015.

"We certainly see the benefits, though it is up to the government and the regulators how to undertake the initiative," said Joe Doering, head of Nokia Siemens Networks' Asia South region, during a briefing on broadband and networking trends held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Ortigas.

Nokia Siemens is a telecommunications solutions supplier created in 2006 by a 50-50 joint venture between Nokia's and Siemens AG's network divisions.

Quoting data from the London Business School, Doering said a 10-percent growth in the telecommunications industry of a developing country boosts the growth rate of its gross domestic product by 0.6 percentage points a year.

The number may not seem much but, compounded over a few years, it can add up to a big increase in living standards, according to the London Business School study, which looked at 92 emerging and developed countries between 1980 and 2003.

Marko Lius, business unit and industry marketing officer for Asia-Pacific, added that desire for information, applications and services without the need to go to a physical location would be especially in demand in a country made up of islands, such as the Philippines.

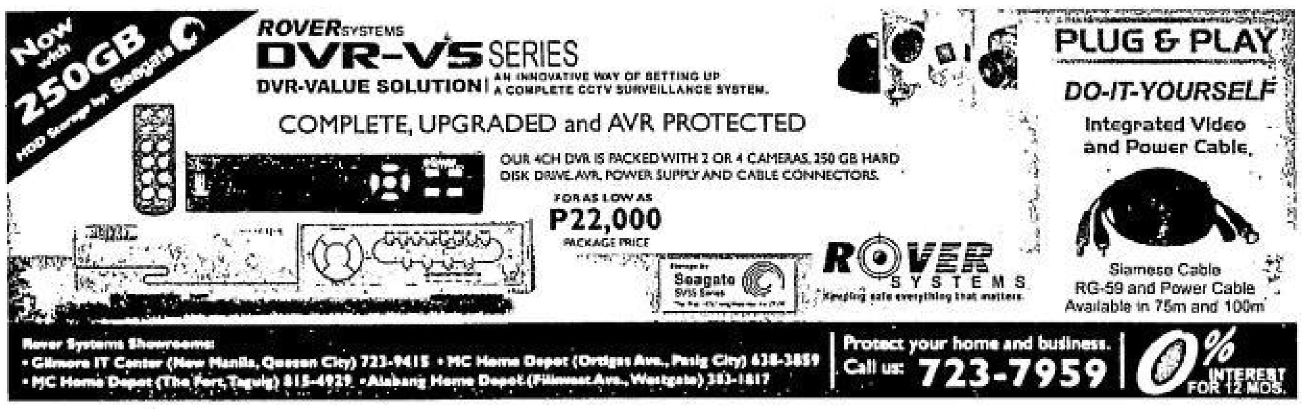
"We see 50 million Filipinos using the Internet by 2015, whether by wired or wireless means, but more likely, fixed and mobile connectivity will have converged by then," he said. "This (50 million) may seem like a big number right now and the numbers may vary depending on which study you look at, but all the studies point to an explosion of demand for broadband."

Being a supplier of telecommunications equipment and solutions to all local telcos, the company could directly or indirectly participate in broadbanding the countryside.

Steven Tai, Nokia's customer marketing officer for the Asia South subregion, said that Nokia Siemens has the expertise in networking solutions needed for such a project.

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) is planning to hold a bidding on a new version of the NBN project open to local telecommunications companies next year.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza earlier said in a forum that, despite the cancellation of the controversial NBN deal with China's ZTE Corp., the government still needed to provide broadband access to government agencies nationwide, down to the barangay (village) offices.



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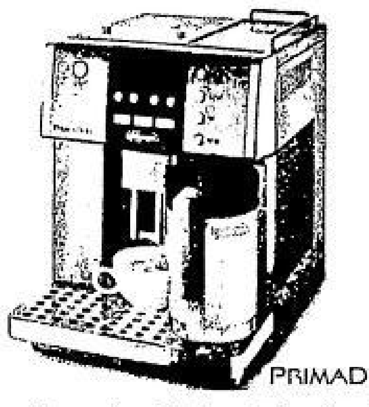

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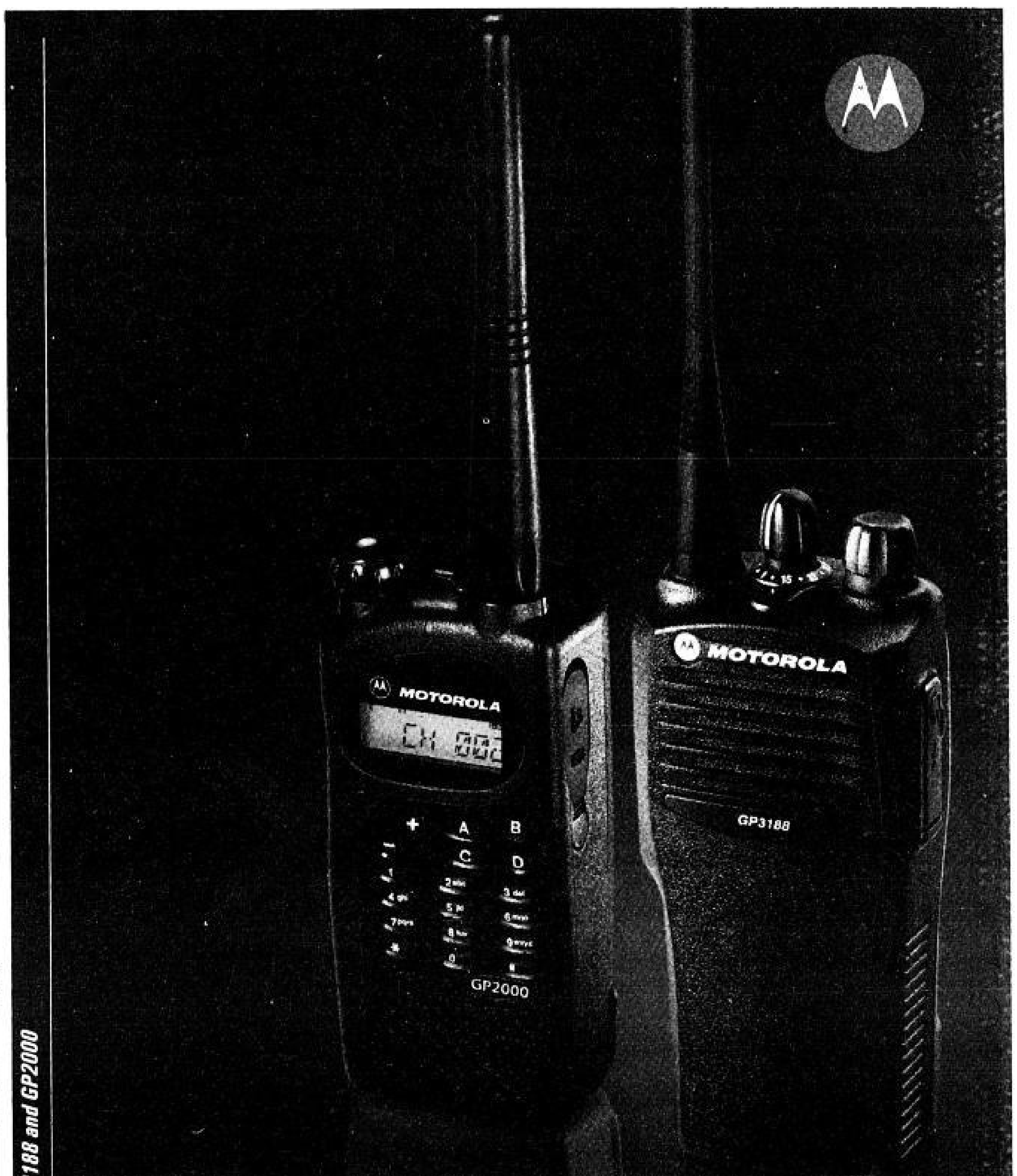

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3821 Series of 2007

Metrobank sells P2.9B worth of foreclosed assets

By Doris C. Dumlao

METROPOLITAN BANK AND Trust Co., the country's largest bank, has sold P2.9 billion worth of foreclosed assets in the first nine months, riding on the growth of the property market.

The bank reported yesterday that the value of real and other property assets (Ropa) sold during the period was 170 percent higher than what it got in the same period last year.

Ropas are pieces of property acquired by banks through foreclosure or dacion en pago (payment in kind) in settlement of uncollected loans or past due accounts.

Banks are required by law to sell the acquired assets within five years.

"All these properties were sold in-house and through our broker and branch network," said Metrobank senior vice president Christine Carandang.

"The continued improvement in the economy and the sustained growth in property development are helping asset sales of Philippine banks. As we forge stronger tie-ups with broker networks, coupled with our aggressive sales efforts, we remain positive on the prospects of asset disposal activities," she added.

Assets sold through individual auctions command higher prices than those sold in bulk through special purpose vehicles.

"There are also different ways of asset disposal that we are tapping into. These include retail sales through auctions and joint ventures with reputable real estate firms. We choose on the basis of timeliness and pricing benefits. On the whole, these initiatives are supportive of the bank's strategy of maintaining a healthy balance sheet," Carandang said.

Metrobank boosted its balance sheet through the sale of close to P10 billion worth of non-performing assets in 2006.

Based on the quarterly report submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission as of September 2007, the Metrobank group's net investment properties (which include Ropa) improved to only 4.7 percent of consolidated total assets from 5.3 percent in the comparative period last year.

Consolidated non-performing loan ratio likewise dropped to 6.9 percent of total consolidated loan portfolio from 9.8 percent as of September 2006.

The group earlier reported a 19.7 percent year-on-year increase in consolidated net income to P5.31 billion as of September, while consolidated total assets stood at P673.84 billion at the end of the third quarter.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
GLOBAL MANPOWERLINK DB INC. Unit 2402, 24/F 139 Corporate Center, Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Yuki Tanaka Japanese	Assistant Consultant
AIR PHILIPPINES CORPORATION R-1 Hangar APC Gate 1, Andrews Ave., Nichols, Pasay City	Matthew William Hobson Australian	Field Service Representative
SPI TECHNOLOGIES INC. SPI Bldg., Pascor Drive., Sto. Niño, Parañaque City	Venkesh Ethiraj Indian	Six Sigma Manager
HAFELE PHILIPPINES INC. 103 Central Business Park, Amang Rodriguez Ave., Manggahan, Pasig City	Stefan Martin Wolf German	Product Manager
ORANG TUA GROUP PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 8 Topy's Place, No. 7 Industria cor. Economia Sts., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City	Robert Octavianus Kusardi Indonesian	Country Manager
TOWA DENKI TRADING PHILIPPINES 1104-A Richville Corporate Tower, Alabang-Zapote Rd., Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Kazuhiko Hara Japanese	Executive Advisor
BERONG NICKEL CORPORATION Philam Bldg., C. Palanca 100, Legaspi Village, 1229 Makati City	Nicholas Gordon Shakesby Australian	Operations Manager
B. B. SHIPPING NAVIGATION CORP. Unit 15-S Legaspi Tower 300 Roxas Blvd. cor. Vito Cruz, Malate, Manila	Young Sook Yoo (w/o Chung) Korean	Operations Manager
REYES TRAVEL CONSULTANCY 306 Herald Bldg., 61 Muralla St., Intramuros, Manila	Akio Hayashi Japanese	Foreign Consultant
KOK MING TRADING LTD. CO. U-707 550 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Jinxiu Wang Chinese	Consultant

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-DIRECTOR

(PDI – November 28, 2007)

Ambuklao, Binga attract big bidders

By Abigail L. Ho

DESPITE THE CONTROVERSIES HOUNDING the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., the bidding for the 175-megawatt (MW) Ambuklao-Binga hydropower plant package will push through today as scheduled.

In a statement yesterday, PSALM said today's bidding would be a showdown among three industry bigwigs—all winners in previous rounds of bidding for National Power Corp.'s generation assets.

Expected to submit their final bids for the plant package are the Lopezes' First Gen Corp., the Aboitizes' SN Aboitiz Power Inc., and Calaca Power Partners Co. Ltd., which won the bidding for the 600-MW Masinloc coal-fired power plant.

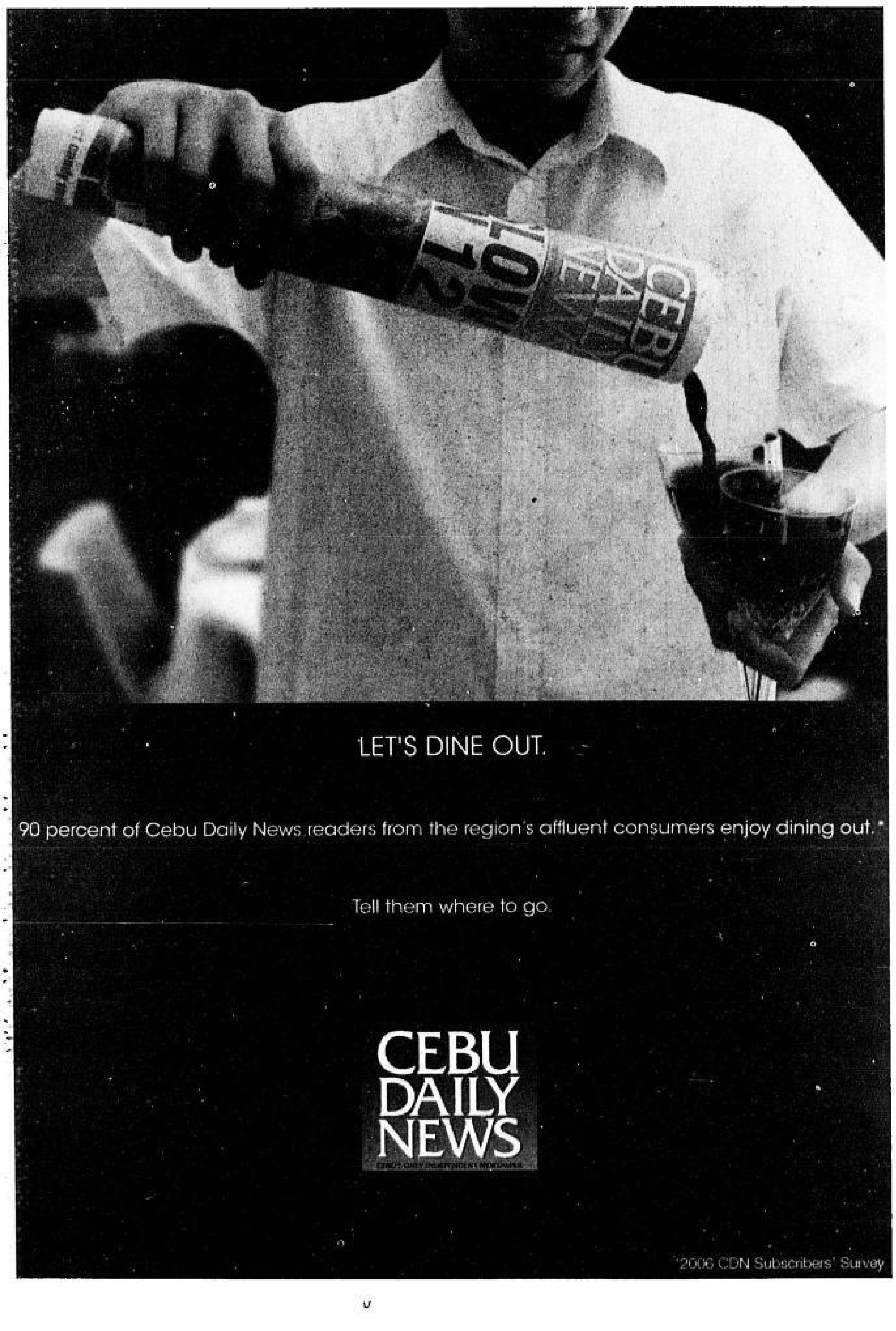
First Gen became the first owner of a Napocor plant when it won the bidding in 2004 for the 1.6-MW Agusan hydropower facility in Bukidnon.

The Aboitizes' SNAP, on the other hand, won the Dec. 14, 2006 bidding for the 360-MW Magat hydropower plant in Isabela with a bid of $530 million.

Up for grabs in today's bidding are the 75-MW Ambuklao and 100-MW Binga hydropower facilities, two of the oldest Napocor plants, having been completed in 1956 and 1960, respectively.

Ambuklao's three 25-MW generating units have not been operating since 2000.

The Binga plant, on the other hand, remains in operation.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Personal accident insurance

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE GIRL WHOSE DEAD BODY WAS found stuffed in a suitcase floating off North Harbor was reported in the press as having been insured under a P40,000 Personal Accident (PA) policy.

As the title implies, a PA policy insures against bodily injury caused by, or arising out of, an accident.

PA policies are a relatively new line of insurance in the Philippines. It used to be available only as a rider or extension to a life insurance policy. The most common rider was the Accidental Death and Disability (ADD) rider. It is still widely used.

Today, every non-life company sells PA insurance. And there is a wide variety of policies in the market. Most of the policies are sold on an individual basis. But policies covering a family are available. Also, it is quite popular for an employer to buy a group policy for his employees.

PA policies are usually written on an annual basis. But you can buy a policy to cover you on your two-week trip to Hong Kong. Or, you can buy a policy to cover you only while you are at work, a sort of a truncated workmen's compensation policy.

While the demand continues to grow, PA insurance accounts for only about 4 percent of the total business of the industry.

The standard policy covers death or permanent disability occurring within 180 days from the date of the accident. Permanent disability means actual severance or total loss of use of a limb.

The policy contains a table of limits for permanent disability. For example, the benefit for the loss of an arm at or above the elbow is 70 percent of the principal sum, or sum insured.

The policy also covers actual cost of medical or surgical treatment of injuries, subject to the limit specified in the table of benefits.

As in any other policy, there are exceptions in a PA policy, such as, self-inflicted injuries, illness, disease, bacterial infection, service in the Armed Forces, and war. A new addition to the list of exceptions is terrorism.

Then, the PA policy is extended to cover death or disability caused by MURDER or ASSAULT, provided (a) it is not provoked by the insured, or (b) caused by war, invasion, mutiny, riot, or rebellion, or (c) it does not occur in places like Lanao, Cotabato, Zamboanga, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat and Sulu.

PA policies are issued only to persons not less than 18 years and not more than 65 years old. Insurers feel that those outside these ages are more prone to accidents.

For those below the adult age of 18, there is a legal problem. The company does not like to keep a death claim pending until the court appoints an administrator to the estate.

It is interesting then that the body in the suitcase was that of a 7-year-old girl. A person that young is not usually insurable at all under any kind of a policy.

But it is a clear case of murder payable under a PA policy. I cannot wait to find out how the death claim will be settled.

Imports jumped 8.9% …

From page B1

cants and related materials was largely due to the increase in oil prices rather than a rise in the import volume. He said there was no substantial increase in the volume of imported oil requirements of industries.

In the case of the Philippines, bulk of its imports are raw materials and intermediate goods rather than consumer goods. As such, a growth in imports normally indicates a subsequent expansion in exports in the months ahead.

The growth in exports so far averaged 4.8 percent from January to September, slower than the target of 11 percent set by economic officials.

The United States remained the Philippines' biggest source of imports, accounting for $660.11 million of the total import bill for September. This represented a 3-percent drop from $680.83 million recorded in the same month a year ago.

Singapore displaced Japan, which used to be the second-biggest source of imports, with $592.85 million, up 70 percent year-on-year. Japan followed with $580.6 million, which was down 19.9 percent from $724.4 million a year ago.

Other top sources of imports for September were: Taiwan ($386.23 million), China ($325.11 million), South Korea ($288.06 million), Saudi Arabia ($252.24 million), Malaysia ($229.93 million), Thailand ($215.44 million), and Hong Kong ($205.83 million).

3rd quarter growth estimated at 6.7%

From page B1

lag the contribution of the farm and services sectors," Trinidad said.

Lackluster export volume growth was seen as a drag to manufacturing while domestic market-oriented industries such as the car industry were seen providing the upside to manufacturing growth.

"Mining and quarrying output due to improved commodity prices and construction activity would probably lead the industrial sector," Trinidad said.

He pointed out that industrial kilowatt per hour sales of Meralco, a broad indicator of manufacturing output, had grown by only 3.6 percent in the third quarter from a year ago.

Favorable consumption prospects were seen boosting the output of retail and wholesale trade, tourism as well as the transport, storage and communications.

On the demand side, he said local consumption would likely continue to carry the growth load while helping subdue offshore risk to growth, citing the 25.4-percent rise in the government's fiscal spending outside of interest payments in the third quarter.

Citigroup also estimated that the real value of overseas Filipino workers remittances declined by 4.8 percent year-on-year in the third quarter despite the 9-percent rise in the US dollar value of these OFW inflows during the quarter.

"The headline estimate might exaggerate the strong peso effect," Trinidad said. "OFWs in non-US labor markets probably got paid in foreign currencies with better value. This could help mute the strong peso effect."

The economist estimated that half of the remittances had likely come outside of non-US markets.

"Poor estimates of the real peso value of the remittances lead us to assume personal consumption growth of 5.9 percent year-on-year in the third quarter compared to 6 percent in second quarter," he said.

CURRENCIES

November 27, 2007

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.671998	1.000000	42.8480
Japan	Yen	0.006262	0.009319	0.3993
United Kingdom	Pound	1.392044	2.071500	88.7596
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.086343	0.128487	5.5054
Switzerland	Franc	0.613081	0.912326	39.0913
Canada	Dollar	0.678923	1.010305	43.2895
Singapore	Dollar	0.465276	0.692377	29.6670
Australia	Dollar	0.589059	0.876578	37.5596
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.793908	2.669514	114.3833
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.181597	0.270234	11.5790
Brunei	Dollar	0.463670	0.689988	29.5646
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000072	0.000107	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.021677	0.032258	1.3822
UAE	Dirham	0.183205	0.272628	11.6816
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.488100	63.7621
Korea	Won	0.000723	0.001076	0.0461
China	Yuan**	0.090849	0.135192	5.7927
Denmark	Kroner	0.134140	0.199613	8.5530
India	Rupee	0.016978	0.025265	1.0826
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.200357	0.298151	12.7752
New Zealand	Dollar	0.507015	0.754489	32.3283
Sweden	Kroner	0.107851	0.160493	6.8768
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.020792	0.030941	1.3258

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Nov. 26, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of Nov. 26, 2007

RP businesses urged to invest in Vietnam

By Daxim L. Lucas

HO CHI MINH CITY—PHILIPPINE BUSINESSES have been urged to set up operations in Vietnam where the ongoing economic boom has created a large need for talent that Filipinos can provide.

Speaking before the Second Philippine-Vietnam Business Mission, Vietnamese Ambassador to Manila Vu Xuan Truong said that his country's dynamic business scene was in need of management and entrepreneurial expertise which Filipinos are known for.

"Filipino [businessmen] were one of the first to come to Vietnam," he said, describing the period right after the Southeast Asian country first liberalized its economy.

"But Philippine [presence] in Vietnam is not very strong perhaps because of a lack of information."

Vietnam's economy is set to grow by as much as 8.5 percent by yearend, making it the fastest growing among its peers in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and the region's second-fastest behind China.

Ambassador Vu said the ongoing boom was a direct result of the Vietnamese government's decision to overhaul the country's economic structure almost 20 years ago.

"The innovation policy of Vietnam started with that and is still continuing," he said. "We will still intensify that process."

The business mission was organized by ZMG Signium Ward Howell regional director Willy Arcilla, who believes that trade ties with Vietnam would help Filipino businessmen adopt and bring home the best traits of their neighbors.

"We have to take a close look at how they achieved this economic boom that they're experiencing now," he said. "Businessmen can play a unique role in this."

Arcilla pointed out that the Philippines could learn important lessons from Vietnam in areas like tourism. Vietnam expects to receive five million foreign tourists by yearend, compared to the Philippine government's best case goal of 2.5 million.

"Of that number [which the Philippine government is aiming for], half of them are balikbayans (Filipinos from overseas)," he said.

Ambassador Vu told Filipino businessmen that Vietnam's boom was anchored on restructuring the economy from the centrally-planned model to a market-determined one.

Through this, Vietnam managed to reduce its poverty rate from 60 percent in the past decade to only 15 percent at present, he said.

The country also focused on attracting foreign direct investments (FDI) through aggressive privatization of state-owned enterprises and generous incentive schemes.

Vietnam now expects to see as much as $15 billion worth of FDI by yearend, making it the second-most preferred destination for investments in the region after China.

Finally, Ambassador Vu said Vietnam also benefited from the government's decision to integrate the economy with the rest of the region and the world, mainly through ots entry into the World Trade Organization last January.

"The challenge now is for Filipino and Vietnamese businessmen to identify the opportunities for both sides," the official said. "They need to talk."

The Second Philippine-Vietnam Business Mission is composed of 26 Filipino businessmen, who were hosted by their Vietnamese counterparts as well as Filipino businessmen who have successfully set up shop in the southern city of Ho Chi Minh.

The conference includes presentations on the local business environment, regulatory and market environments, as well as site visits to Vietnam's major food, aquaculture, real estate and handicrafts firms.

Cooperative to expand bagasse plant

By Amy R. Remo

FIRST FARMERS HOLDINGS CORP. IS investing P600 million in the upgrade of its sugarcane-bagasse cogeneration plant in Talisay, Negros Occidental.

The expansion will allow the company to produce as much as 30 megawatts every milling season.

FFHC is a cooperative-based Filipino agro industrial business enterprise with interests in sugar milling and refining, sugarcane production, poultry and feed mill operations and agricultural nurseries.

According to FFHC board member Bernardo C. Trebol, the group started upgrading the plant early this year and expected to complete the project by the middle of 2008.

FFHC's current capacity is about 5 MW for every milling season.

Trebol said in a briefing that FFHC has tapped funds from the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines to pursue the project.

Once finished, the newly upgraded cogeneration plant will sell some 15 MW to other sugar millers and use the rest for its own sugar mill.

FFHC maintains its own integrated sugar mill and refinery and produces raw, premium, washed, standard refine, premium refined and bottler's grade sugar.

It produces 5,000 to 6,000 metric tons of sugar a day.

Local Government Unit
Standard Form Number : SF-INFRA-05
revised on July 29, 2004

P2007 – 82
Construction of Lampanusan PWS
Lampanusan, Kalilangan, Bukidnon

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government Unit of Kalilangan, Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of the Contract	: *Construction of Lampanusan PWS*
Location	: *Lampanusan, Kalilangan, Bukidnon*
Brief Description	: *Construction of merged Lower Don Jose-Lampanusan Level II Potable Water Supply System*
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	: *Php 8,824,823.94 (Straight Contract)*
Contract Duration	: *Four (4) months*

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities are listed, as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Posting / Advertisement	November 28 – December 4, 2007
2. Submission & acceptance of LOI & Application for Eligibility / Issuance of Eligibility Documents	December 5 – 11, 2007
3. Eligibility Checking / Screening	December 12 – 15, 2007
4. Submission of Request for Reconsideration by Ineligible Bidders	December 16 – 18, 2007
5. Issuance and availability of Bid Documents	December 19 – 25, 2007
6. Pre-bidding conference	December 21, 2007
7. Deadline for submission and receipt of Bids / Opening of Bids	January 3, 2008; 9:00 A.M.
8. Post-qualification of Bids & Determination of LCRB	January 10, 2008
9. Award of Contract	January 11 – 14, 2008
10. Contract Preparation and signing/Contract Approval	January 15 – 27, 2008
11. Issuance of Notice to Proceed	January 28 – 30, 2008

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at the ***Municipal Hall, Kalilangan, Bukidnon**, upon their submission of LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP 2,000.00* to the Municipal Treasurer's Office. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of *Php 15,000.00* to the Municipal Treasurer's Office.

The ***Local Government of Kalilangan, Bukidnon*** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **PATERNO D. GREGORIO, JR.**
AO II/BAC Vice-Charman

(PDI – November 28, 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

November 21, 2007

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation (RIZ-07-29492)

The scope of work shall include Supply of Labor, Tools, Materials and Equipment for the Repair, Tesing, Installing and Commissioning of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation including Supply and Retrofitting of Electronic Winding and Oil Temperature Monitoring Device.

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION** (TransCo), through the Annual Corporate Budget of 2007 intends to apply the sum of **PHILIPPINE PESOS FORTY MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 40,500,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation. **Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected.**
2. **TransCo** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation.** The duration of the contract is **Seven (7) Months.** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

   Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last fifteen (15) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **TransCo** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 A.M.** to **5:00 P.M.**, during working days starting **November 27, 2007.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of **PHP 5,000.00.** The method of payment will be on **cash basis only.** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **TransCo** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **December 6, 2007 at 1:30 P.M.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before the date and time specified in item 8 below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount specified in Clause 22, Section III, Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding documents or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **December 20, 2007 at 1:30 P.M.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
9. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the said address.
10. The bidding is also open to foreign bidders with eligibility requirements described in Clause 3 above and in the Bidding Documents.
11. **TransCo** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

MR. RICHARD D. NABONG
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department
Ground Floor, Power Center
National Transmission Corporation
Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road
1104, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Telephone No. (632) 981-2212; 981-2213; 921-23-08
Fax No.: (632) 921-23-08
Email Address: **rdnabong@transco.ph**
Website address: **http://www.transco.ph**

(Sgd.) **ATTY. NOEL Z. DE LEON**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Nov. 28 & Dec. 6, 2007)

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-0963 Series of 2007

Coal demand expected to rise in '08

RP can only supply a third of 12.2M MT needed

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINES' DEMAND for coal, both for power generation and for industries, will reach 12.246 million metric tons (MT) next year, with only a third coming from local mines.

According to the coal demand and supply outlook found in the Philippine Energy Plan (PEP), the power sector would account for 10.177 million MT of this expected demand, while industries would consume 2.07 million MT.

Of this total, only 3.88 million MT would come from local mines, with the balance to be imported from China, Indonesia and Australia.

Over the next few years, the PEP projected coal demand to grow to around 15.28 million MT in 2014, with coal for power reaching 13.06 million MT and industries accounting for 2.22 million MT.

Coal production would also rise in step with demand, hitting 6.603 million MT by 2014 from 3.88 million MT in 2008.

According to the Department of Energy, a production boom was expected in the near future as new contracts reach full production and exploration contracts converted into production agreements.

"As coal demand continues to increase, coal mining companies realize the need to fill the void by pursuing coal exploration projects around the country," MG Mining and Energy Corp. vice chair Rufino Bomasang said in a statement.

MG Mining specializes in coal exploration and extraction, as well as the processing and trade of coal and other energy-related products.

The company has, in the past two years, focused on the development of coal assets through the acquisition of coal-operating contracts, mostly in Mindanao.

Bomasang said the country still had largely untapped coal resources, with the potential of producing 1,000-2,000 megawatts of power.

This should be equivalent to up to $2 billion in investments for at least 25 years.

"Coal is a cheaper alternative to other energy mix. Coal is indigenous and we have untapped potential in our own backyard that we can explore," he said.

Right now, he said only Semirara Mining Corp. had mines big enough to supply the requirement of major coal-fired power plants.

Semirara produces around 3 million MT of coal each year.

Outside of Semirara, however, Bomasang said there were many other areas in the country that had enough potential reserves to supply the requirements of major power plants in the country for the next 25 years.

These deposits are in Isabela (lignite) with a potential of 150-300 MW, Cagayan (lignite) with at least 100 MW, Surigao Del Sur (lignite and sub-bituminous) with 300 MW, South Cotabato (sub-bituminous) with 300-900 MW and Zamboanga Sibugay (bituminous) with around 200 MW.

Other coal deposits can be found in Cebu, Masbate, Catanduanes, Batan Island, Negros Occidental and Samar, but these are generally in difficult geological conditions.

Those in the Cotabato basin, however, had the potential to have coal resources as big as, or even bigger than, Semirara, he said, according to surface indications that had yet to be fully explored.

He said power generators could now tap new technology to enable them to use lower quality Philippine coal in their operations, boosting the potential market for locally mined coal.

The added cost that would be incurred in using such new technology, he said, could be eventually offset by the savings they would generate by partly shifting to local coal.

He related that in other countries, conventional pulverized coal-fired power plants were already using low-rank coal, some of which had much lower heating value than Philippine coal.

Current fluidized bed technologies, he said, enabled the use of a wide range of coal types, even the low-rank ones found in the country.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. **Janitorial Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008**
2. **Security Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008**
3. **Freight Forwarding Services for the Shipment of Forms, Equipment, Plates and Stickers from January 1 to December 31, 2008**
4. **Fabrication of Dies (letter and number) for the use of Plate Making Plant (PMP)**
5. **Conversion of Three (3) units Power Presses from Pedal to Hand Switch**

The Land Transportation Office, through the General Funds (Fund 101) intends to apply the following sum being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC for the aforesaid projects, to wit.

1. **Janitorial Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – Php 4,708,000.00**
2. **Security Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – Php 12,580,000.00**
3. **Freight Forwarding Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – Php 2,882,000.00**
4. **Fabrication of Dies (letters and numbers) for the use of Plate Making Plant (PMP) – Php 270,000.00**
5. **Conversion of Three (3) units Power Presses from Pedal to Hand Switch – Php 435,480.00**

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Sub-Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Property Section starting November 28, 2007 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the BAC-Secretariat at the Property Section, starting November 28, 2007 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00, in the form of cash for each project. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold the following schedules of the Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City, to wit:

1. **Janitorial Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – December 7, 2007 / 9:00 A.M.**
2. **Security Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – December 7, 2007 / 10:00 A.M.**
3. **Freight Forwarding Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 – December 7, 2007 / – 11:00 A.M.**
4. **Conversion of Three (3) units Power Presses from Pedal to Hand Switch – December 7, 2007 / 1:00 P.M.**

Submission and Opening of Bids and Eligibility Requirements shall be at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City on the following schedules to wit.

1. **Janitorial Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 — December 20, 2007 / 9:00 A.M.**
2. **Security Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 — December 20, 2007 / 10:00 A.M.**
3. **Freight Forwarding Services Covering the Period from January 1 to December 31, 2008 — December 20, 2007 / 11:00 A.M.**
4. **Conversion of Three (3) units Power Presses from Pedal to Hand Switch — December 20, 2007 / 1:00 P.M.**
5. **Fabrication of Dies (Letter and Number) for the use of Plate Making Plant (PMP) - December 10, 2007 10:00 A.M.**

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following form

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the said address.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Atty. Jimmy G. Pesigan – Chairman, BAC
East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 921-9027 – Telefax

Annabella A. Cruz – Chairman, BAC Sub-Committee
Property Section LTO, East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9292015 – Telefax

(Sgd.) **ATTY. JIMMY G. PESIGAN**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – November 28, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
LRT LINE 1 NORTH EXTENSION PROJECT

1. The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) invites potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the bidding of the Contract Packages described below. The funds have been provided for by the Government of the Philippines (GOP). The Contracts shall be executed on a "Design-Build" Contract basis.

Name of Contract	Package A1	Package A2	Package B
Location	Metro Manila	Metro Manila	Metro Manila
Brief Description	Construction of Viaduct from km 15.133 to km 17.870 (2.737 km) and Pedestrian Overpasses	Construction of Viaduct from km 17.870 to km 20.614 (2.744 km)	Construction of Stations and Station Modifications
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pesos 1.398 billion	Pesos 1.402 billion	Pesos 0.83 billion
Contract Duration	22 months	22 months	22 months

2. Prospective Bidders should possess a Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license applicable to the respective type and cost of the said contracts. Prospective Bidders for each Package should have completed a similar single contract with a value of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of said Package and should meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

3. Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR – A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or entities with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.

4. The Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) will issue Eligibility Documents to the prospective Bidders upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI), and payment of a non-refundable fee of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (PhP 15,000) for each Package to the Light Rail Transit Authority. Interested Bidders shall submit the duly accomplished Eligibility Documents to the SBAC at the address given below, on or before the deadline for receipt of Eligibility Documents. Only those bidders passing the Eligibility Check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.

5. The SBAC shall open the bids at the time, date and place specified. The SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall determine each Bidder's compliance with the documents required to be submitted for the Technical Proposal of the Bid, as prescribed in Instructions to Bidders of IRR-A. For this purpose, on the Day of Opening of Bid, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall check the submitted documents of each Bidder against a checklist of required documents to ascertain if they are all present in the first (Technical) envelope, using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. If a Bidder submits all required documents, it shall be rated "passed" for that particular requirement. In this regard, failure to submit a requirement, or an incomplete or patently insufficient submission, shall be considered "failed" for the particular requirement concerned. In case one or more of the above required documents in the first envelope of a particular Bid is missing, incomplete, or patently insufficient, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall rate the Bid concerned as "failed" and immediately return to the Bidder concerned its second (Financial) envelope unopened. Immediately after determining compliance with the requirements in the first bid envelope (Technical Proposal), the SBAC shall forthwith collect all the second bid envelopes (Financial Proposals) of the remaining complying bidders, whose first bid envelope was rated "passed" and seal them in a separate BOX in the presence of the Bidder's representatives of the complying bidders, who may also initial on the seal.

6. This being a "**Design – Build**" Contract, the second (Financial) envelope of the complying bidders shall be opened only after due evaluation for the responsiveness of the Technical Proposals and its compliance to the Performance Specifications/Employer's Requirements. The Date of Opening of the Financial Envelope shall be informed to all Bidders, whose Technical Proposal, after evaluation is found technically responsive and compliant to the Performance Specifications/Employer's Requirements. In the Financial Proposal (in the second envelope), in case one or more of the requirements of a particular bid is missing, incomplete or patently insufficient, and/or if the submitted total bid price exceeds the ABC, the SBAC shall rate the bid concerned as "failed." Bids that are determined to contain all the requirements for the second (Financial) envelope shall be rated "passed" and shall immediately be considered for detailed evaluation of the Financial Bids.

7. Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the contract. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

8. The schedule for the various activities and the venue are as follows:

SBAC Activities	Package A1	Package A2	Package B
Receipt of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Issuance of Eligibility Documents	8 AM to 5 PM, November 28 to December 6, 2007 Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) Secretariat, Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001.		
Pre-Eligibility Conference	9 AM, December 11, 2007 Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.		
Receipt of Eligibility Documents (Opening and deadline)	9AM, December 19, 2007	9AM, December 20, 2007	9AM, December 21, 2007
	Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.		
Issuance of Bid Documents	8 AM to 5 PM, January 3 to 12, 2008		
Pre- bid Conference	9AM, January 22, 2008 Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.		
Receipt of Technical and Financial Bids and opening of Technical Bids (Opening and deadline)	9 AM, March 19, 2008	9 AM, March 20, 2008	9 AM, March 21, 2008
	Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.		
Opening of Financial Bids	9 AM, April 15, 2008 Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.		

9. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the Eligibility Check at the address given below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP 50,000) for each Package, to the Light Rail Transit Authority. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative.

10. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the appropriate form and amount as specified in RA 9184 and the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

11. The Light Rail Transit Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Eligibility Documents or Bids, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC)
Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound,
Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001
Telephone: +63-2-833-2466, Facsimile: +63-2-831-6449.

(PDI–Nov. 28, 2007)

Solon seeks end to automatic appropriation for debt service

By Michelle V. Remo

BUDGET FOR SERVICING THE COUNTRY'S debts should no longer be automatically appropriated, and Congress should have more power to scrutinize loans secured by the government.

This was the proposal submitted by Sen. Pia Cayetano, who believes that the current practice of automatically appropriating budget for debt payments is not prudent, given the alleged corruption involved in contracting loans for government projects.

Cayetano cited the previous controversial loan agreement between the Philippine government and Chinese firm ZTE Corp., and the alleged anomalies in the bidding for infrastructure projects funded by a loan from the World Bank.

The supposed national broadband project, the contract for which was won by ZTE, was not only said to be overpriced but was also considered to be unnecessary for government operations.

Some infrastructure projects funded by a World Bank loan reportedly involved collusion between government officials and a bidder for the contract.

"I like it to be our (Congress') objective to have more say on how funds are allocated," Cayetano said during a Senate hearing on the proposed 2008 national budget the other day. She noted that no case has ever been brought to court involving loan-funded projects marred with corruption.

Cayetano said that, instead of automatically appropriating budget for servicing debts, Congress should first determine whether the liabilities involved illegitimate deals. Because a huge portion of the national budget is eaten by debt payments, there should be efforts to scrutinize the nature of the loans.

The lady senator also said the Philippines should join other middle-income nations in asking creditor countries to repudiate some loans. The proposal was lifted from a UN-commissioned study on how to help debt-ridden countries attain the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Cayetano said the Philippines was a signatory to the United Nations' MDGs, which counted as one of its targets the eradication of extreme poverty by 2015.

But the debt of the national government, which stood close to P4 trillion, could hamper the state's effort to provide enough resources to meet the MDGs.

"If debt gets in the way, we should be creative enough to explore other ways of meeting the MDGs," Cayetano said.

Cebu Pacific to lower fares in early 2008

By Riza T. Olchondra

CHRISTMAS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, but Cebu Pacific is already thinking of travel in early 2008.

The budget carrier is offering more than 100,000 domestic seats for P1 one way for those flying between Jan. 1 and March 12, 2008.

"We have allocated more than 100,000 seats for this year-end seat sale," airline vice president for marketing and product Candice Iyog said. "Guests can buy their tickets from Nov. 28 to Dec. 2 only, or until seats are sold out."

The promotional one-way fare is not refundable and does not include fuel and insurance surcharges, ranging from P900 to P1,450 one way.

Cebu Pacific has been offering seat sales to encourage more passengers, especially new flyers, to travel.

"We want air travel to be a common occurrence that most people can now experience because of our year-round fares and occasional seat sales," Iyog said.

Civil Aeronautics Board data showed that domestic passenger traffic in the first nine months of the year grew 23 percent to 7.69 million from 6.23 million, aided by the aggressive pricing strategies of local airlines.

"Because of our year-round low 'Go' fares, our occasional promotional seat sales, and our expanding capacity and number of destinations, we expect to carry more than five million passengers this year," she said.

Iyog also said that this is the airline's way of thanking its guests for a good year for both Cebu Pacific and the local travel and tourism industry.

Cebu Pacific took delivery of its 15th A320 aircraft last month and expects its first ATR-72 aircraft in February of next year.

"This is just the start," Iyog said. "With the delivery of four more A320s and four ATRs next year, we expect to be operating many new routes and destinations."

Tickets can be purchased through Cebu Pacific's website, cebupacificair.com, or through its ticketing offices and travel agents.

DEATH NOTICE

FRANCISO LAVERNIE GATDULA

Died on October 17, 2007 in Sweden

His body lies at Sto. Rosario Chapel (near Malolos Elem. School), Malolos, Bulacan. Interment today, Nov. 28, 2007, 2 p.m. at St. Vincent Cemetery, Malolos, Bulacan.

Our Beloved Father

FLORENCIO "JO" GENETA OFIAZA, JR.

June 25, 1949 – November 26, 2007

Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 58.

His loving wife **Rosita**; children **Dax**, **Rhea** and **Sharon**; grandchild **Rhed** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at his residence, #4 Road 1, M. De Leon St., Santolan, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Friday, November 30, 2007, at Santolan Cemetery at 1:00 p.m.

DEATH NOTICES

PABLO "Boy" M. BOTER

of Boac, Marinduque

Died on November 23, 2007 at the age of 64

His body lies in state at Boac, Marinduque. Interment will be on November 30, 2007.

DR. MANOLITO SYJUECO GOZON

September 18, 1936 - November 16, 2007

His remains was transferred at Sts. Peter & John Parish, Orange Road., Bgy. Potrero Malabon City. Funeral Mass today at 1:00 p.m. Interment will follow in Tugatog Cemetery, Malabon after the Mass.

CLASSIFIEDS

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Central Regional Office, Luzon Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY AND FOR ELIGIBILITY

Procurement of 2008 Warehousing Services for NFA Region III
LEASE OF WAREHOUSE STORAGE SPACE

The National Food Authority, NFA Central Luzon Regional Office, Cabanatuan City, invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to submit bids for the lease of warehouses for NFA Region III for the year 2008. The warehouses' aggregate floor areas, capacities, the corresponding Approved Budget for the Contracts (ABC), and the bidding fees are as follows:

LOT	Location	Aggregate Floor Area	Storage Capacity/Bags	Rate/sqm/ Month	ABC	BIDDING FEE
I	Bulacan	14,000	600,000	P67.20	P11,289,600.00	P10,000.00
II	Pampanga	1,920	100,000	P60.00	P 1,382,400.00	P 5,000.00
III	Pampanga	1,920	100,000	P60.00	P 1,382,400.00	P 5,000.00

Interested Bidders shall submit Letter of Intent (LOI) to the RBAC Secretariat together with copies of documents stated below for warehouse accreditation prior to the issuance of Bidding Documents:

a) NFA Certificate of Inspection (Compliance to Technical Requirements)
b) DTI business name registration, CDA Registration and/or SEC registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate (Xerox Copy)
c) Updated Mayor's Permit and Official Receipt

The complete set of Bidding Documents shall be issued only to prospective bidders who had been issued a Notice of Warehouse Accreditation and payment of a non-refundable bidding fee/s. The Bidding Documents shall be reviewed personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The issuance of bid documents, pre-bidding conference, bidding proper and other schedule of activities shall be conducted at NFA-CLRO, Cabanatuan City on the following dates:

ACTIVITY	SCHEDULE (Date/Time)
1. Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI)/ Warehouse Accreditation Documents and Warehouse Inspection	November 28 - December 15, 2007 (Regular Working Days)
2. Issuance of Notice of Accreditation/ Issuance of Bidding Documents	December 3-17, 2007
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	December 18, 2007 @ 10:00 AM
4. Opening of Bids	January 3, 2008 @ 10:00 AM

Availability of the warehouse for lease is required upon receipt of Notice to Proceed/Notice to Occupy until December 31, 2008, or until completion of withdrawal of stocks by NFA, whichever is applicable. All bidding procedures shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman or Secretariat at NFA-CLRO. Cabanatuan City with Telephone Nos. (044) 463-1168, (044) 463-2539 and Fax No. (044) 600-2693.

The National Food Authority, Region III reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN J. RESIDE**
Asst. Regional Manager/
RBAC Chairman

(PDI--Nov. 28, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Center for Health Development – X
NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER
Capitol Compound, Cagayan de Oro City
Telephone No.: 726362; Fax No.: 721794
Website: www.doh.gov.ph/nmmc

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER (NMMC), through the General Appropriations Act 2007 intends to apply the sum of Two Million One Hundred Eight Thousand One Hundred Ninety Five Pesos and Four Centavos (Php 2,108,195.04) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the Contract Rate for Security Services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act." And is restricted to Filipino citizens / sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Northern Mindanao Medical Center and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00). The method of payment will be through Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **December 5, 2007 – 2:00 PM at NMMC Training Room.**

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **9:00 AM of December 18, 2007.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of Cash/Cashier's Check (One percent of the ABC) or Bank Guarantee (One and one-half percent of the ABC). Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **December 18, 2007, 9:00 AM at NMMC Training Room.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER
TROY JOHN T. TABANAS, MD, FPAFP, DPSCOT
Capitol Compound
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. 08822-726362
Fax Number: 08822-721794

(Sgd.) **TROY JOHN T. TABANAS, MD, FPAFP, DPSCOT**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – November 28, 2007)

So dearly loved.......
So fondly remembered. So truly missed.

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES
remembers their beloved

ZENEIDA ANGARA AMADOR

on her third death anniversary who passed away in the grace of our Lord on November 28, 2004.

Holy masses will be offered at the following churches:

St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Magallanes*	6:15AM, 7:00AM, 12:15PM, 6:00PM
Santuario de San Jose, *Greenhills*	6:15PM
Our Lady Of The Abandoned, *Marikina*	6:30AM
St. John Bosco Parish, *Makati*	6:30AM, 12:00NN
Quiapo Church	6:00AM
Sta. Cruz Parish, *Manila*	6:30AM
Santuario de San Antonio, *Forbes Park*	6:15AM, 12:00NN, 6:00PM
Mount Carmel Shrine, *New Manila*	6:00AM
Sto. Domingo Church, *Quezon Avenue*	6:30AM
Mary The Queen Parish, *Greenhills*	6:00PM
Chapel of The Cartwheels, *Hacienda Sta. Rosalia, Manapla, Negros Occidental*	6:00AM
Lupit Church (Sacred Heart Seminary), *Bacolod City, Negros Occidental*	6:00AM
St. Francis of Assisi Parish, *Escalante, Negros Occidental*	6:00AM
San Isidro Catholic Church, *Taft Avenue*	6:00PM
St. Andrew The Apostle Parish, *Makati*	6:30AM, 12:15PM, 6:30PM
Malate Catholic Church	6:00AM
Binondo Church	6:00AM
Manila Cathedral, *Intramuros*	7:30AM
Greenbelt Chapel, *Ayala*	7:15AM, 12:15PM, 5:45PM, 7:00PM
St. Joseph The Worker Chapel, *Meralco*	12:00NN

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE No. DUBA/434/1/07(129) Dated: Nov. 13, 2007. Mr. Rakesh Sharma S/o Dev Ram Sharma resident of D-II-9 Kaka Nagar New Delhi-110003 present address PO Box 31064 Dubai UAE and Miss. May P. Villarama daughter of Ramon and Belen Villarama resident of 15497-A Malinta Los Baños Laguna 4030 Philippines present address PO Box 38323 FUCOM LLC Dubai UAE both Indian and Filipino nationals presently residing in Dubai have given notice of intended marriage between them under the foreign marriage act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage he/she should file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the act/rules within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. K.G. Kesavan, Vice Consul, Consulate General of India, Dubai (UAE) Marriage Officer Consulate General of India, P.O. Box 737, Dubai, UAE.

(PDI--Nov. 28, 2007)

Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this city per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No.	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	3	UNITS	50KVA (PHILEC BRAND), BRAND NEW DOUBLE BUSHING, RATED 13.2/7.62KV, AGENCY PRICE - 110,000.00/UNIT
2	1	UNIT	75KVA (PHILEC BRAND), BRAND NEW DOUBLE BUSHING, RATED 13.2/7.62KV AGENCY PRICE 145,000.00/UNIT
3	1	UNIT	100KVA (PHILEC BRAND), BRAND NEW DOUBLE BUSHING, RATED 13.2/7.62KV 180,500.00/UNIT
4	1	UNIT	167KVA (PHILEC BRAND), BRAND NEW DOUBLE BUSHING, RATED 13.2/7.62KV AGENCY PRICE 296,400.00/UNIT NOTE: IN PREPARATION FOR THE INCOMING ADD'L. LOAD THIS DEC.

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 p.m. of **December 4, 2007** and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on **December 13, 2007.**

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of **December 13, 2007.** Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

(Sgd.) REINERIO R. RAMOS
General Manager

(PDI - Nov. 28 & 29, 2007)

Looking For Supplier
- Active Carbon for industrial wastewater
- 4*8mesh
- with test report

4sales@naver.com

Office Secretary
Female, 20-25,College graduate,Good oral and written English, At least 1yr experience in Export business, w/or w/o driving exp.
E-mail resumé with recent ID photo to
4sales@naver.com

SEA-WORLD GLOBAL, INC.

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LIBRE Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514. JOB Market

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Republic of the Philippines
Pambansang Pangasiwaan ng Patubig
(NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION)
Bago River Irrigation System Rehabilitation & Improvement Project
Region 6, Bago City, Negros Occidental

Tel. No. (34) 461-1367; 461-0306
Telefax No. (34) 461-1367

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Contract No. BRISRIP-LMC-005-07

November 27, 2007

The National Irrigation Administration, Bago River Irrigation System Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (NIA-BRISRIP) under JBIC Loan PH-P229, thru the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all potential Bidders with at least Medium A category and had contract experience on Irrigation, drainage and road construction to apply for eligibility and to bid thru **Local Minor Contracts (LMC)** to undertake construction and improvement of drainage canals, drainage structures and service roads of Sibud Main Drainage including furnishing of labor and materials. The bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedure using a non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of the Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) otherwise known as "Government Procurement Reform Act."

Interested bidders shall secure Eligibility documents at the Bids and Awards Committee at NIA-BRISRIP, Cells Street, Bago City, Negros Occidental, upon presentation of Letter of Intent and current Contractor's License. **Any authorized representative should have the authorization letter duly notarized and signed by the manager/president of firm.**

The Eligibility and Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

Package	Contract Number – LMC-005-07	Approved Budget for the Contract
I	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 7+400 – Sta. 8+560)	P 6,186,087.00
II	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 8+562 – Sta. 10+ 306)	6,389,173.00
III	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 10+310 – Sta.10+960)	5,065,772.00
IV	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 10+964.20 – Sta. 12+220)	6,258,321.00
V	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 12+222 – Sta. 13+366)	6,493,550.00
VI	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 13+371 – Sta. 14 + 316)	7,716,998.00
VII	Construction & Improvement of Sibud Main Drainage (Sta. 14+318 – 15+082)	7,582,734.00

PCAB Registration Particulars	At Least Medium "A"
Issuance of Eligibility Documents	Nov. 28, 2007 at NIA-BRISRIP, Bago City, Negros Occidental
Submission of Eligibility Documents	Dec. 4, 2007 at NIA-BRISRIP, Bago City, Negros Occidental
Issuance of Bidding Documents	Dec. 11, 2007 at NIA-BRISRIP, Bago City, Negros Occidental
Pre-bid Conference	Dec. 14, 2007 at 9:00 AM at NIA-BRISRIP, Bago City, Negros Occidental
Submission and Opening of Bids	Dec. 27, 2007 at 1:30 PM at NIA-BRISRIP, Bago City, Negros Occidental
Contract Duration	One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar days each for Schedules I to VII
Cost of Eligibility Documents	P 1,500.00 (Non-refundable)
Cost of Bidding Documents	P 5,000.00/package (Non-refundable)

The Bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his duly authorized representative.

Only bidders who passed the Eligibility Check can purchase the Bidding Documents. **Pursuant to GPPB Resolution No. 22-2006, prospective bidders should register with PhilGEPS and secure the corresponding Certificate of Registration.**

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in accordance with the schedule as specified in IRR of RA 9184. Late Bids will not be accepted.

The NIA-BRISRIP reserves the right to accept and reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

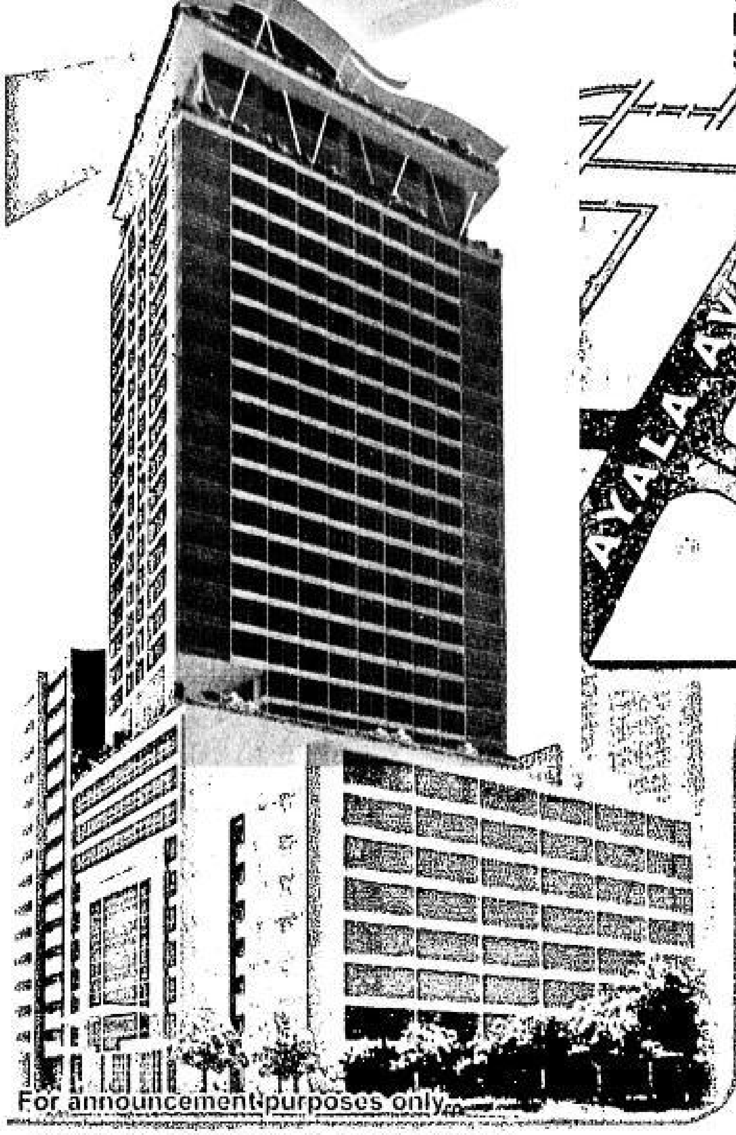
(Sgd.) JOAQUIN P. PALMARES
Chairperson Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – November 28, 2007)

More Classifieds on Pages

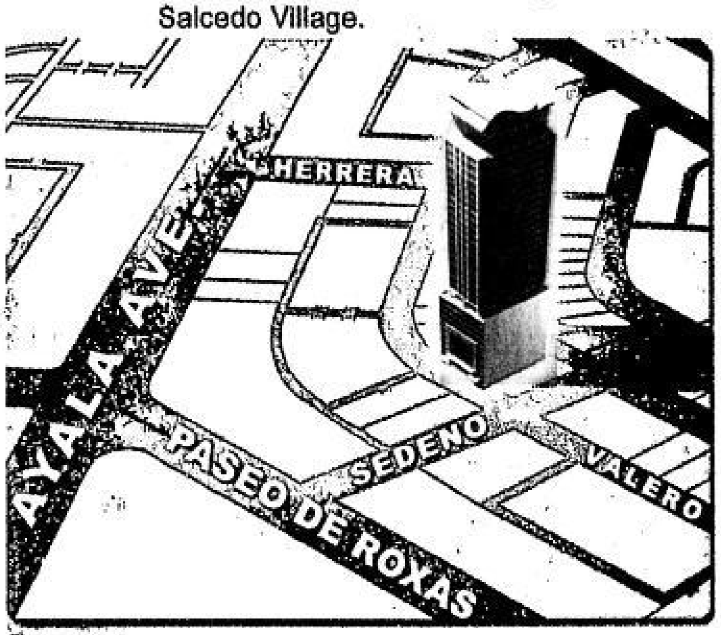
James Hao-Zamcelco	A26
Landbank Realty	A27
DOLE-NCR	B4
National Transmission Corporation	B5
Local Gov't. Unit of Kalilangan	B5
Land Transportation Office	B6
Light Rail Transit Authority	B6

The *Stratosphere*
SALCEDO VILLAGE MAKATI


For announcement purposes only.

A CONCEPT OF DISTINCTION

The Stratosphere is envisioned to be a landmark with a strong image recall with its horizontally cascading curtain walls and a penthouse roof structure of cloud-like layers masterfully designed by R. Villarosa, Architects and Partners. The distinctive design makes this residential condominium a stand out among the existing buildings in Salcedo Village.



Owner / Developer

PRIMEX REALTY CORPORATION
a PRIME EXPONENT in choice real estate

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G/F Richbelt Terraces, 19 Annapolis St. Greenhills, San Juan
Tels. 722-56-69, 722-80-78, 722-54-17

Makati Office:
Tels. 864-0701
864-0702

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER AND ITS GROWING COMMUNITIES:

Primex Realty Corporation is a member of the Primex Group of Companies, a conglomeration of diverse business concerns majority-owned and controlled by the Ang Family. Its collective competence and years of business experience has yielded a whole range of successfully-completed projects, from the progressive residential enclave near commercial Monumento called Goldendale Village, nearby Goldendale Business and Light Industrial Park, The Richdale in scenic Antipolo, to condominiums, like the Chartreuse Garden, Corporate Centre, Greenrich Mansion, and Richbelt Terraces in very prime Makati, Ortigas Complex, and Greenhills. These completed projects have matured and metamorphosed into distinct communities in their own right. Soon, two new ventures, one in Tagaytay and another in Makati, will be added to its list of successful new ventures.

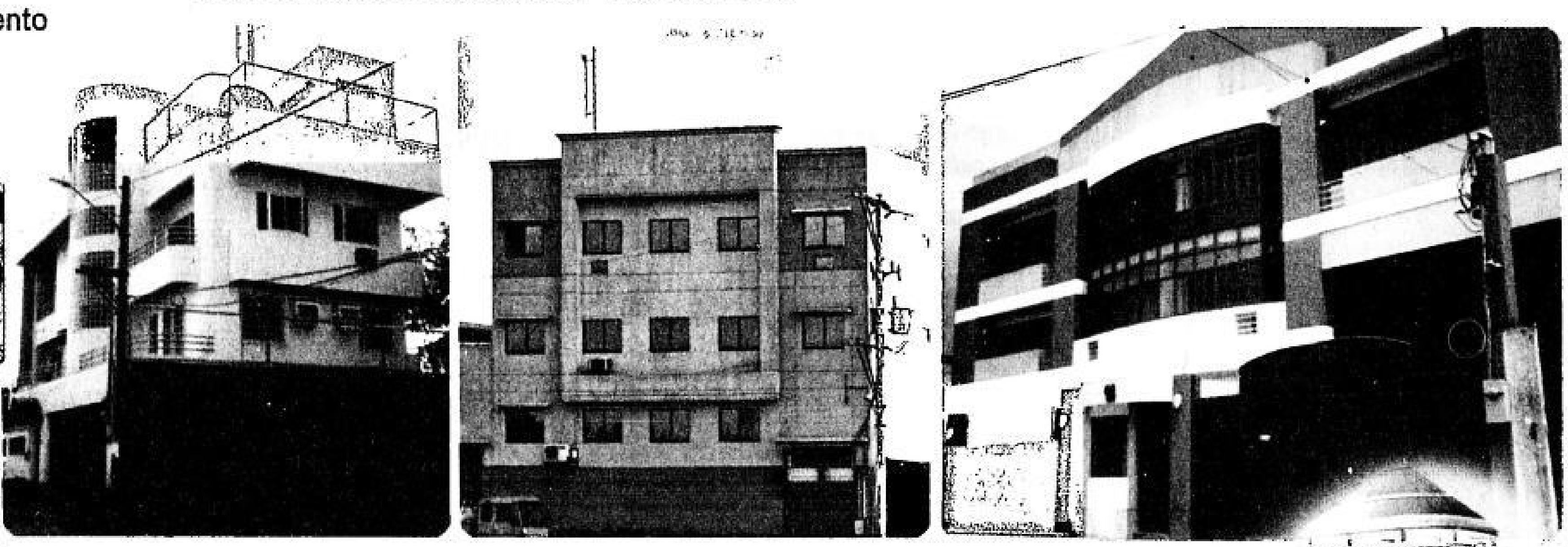
The principal shareholders of Primex, together with Henry Sy, Sr. of the famed SM Group, are the principal proponents of the Xiamen World Trade Center Complex.

GOLDENDALE VILLAGE

A progressive residential enclave near ultra-commercial Monumento

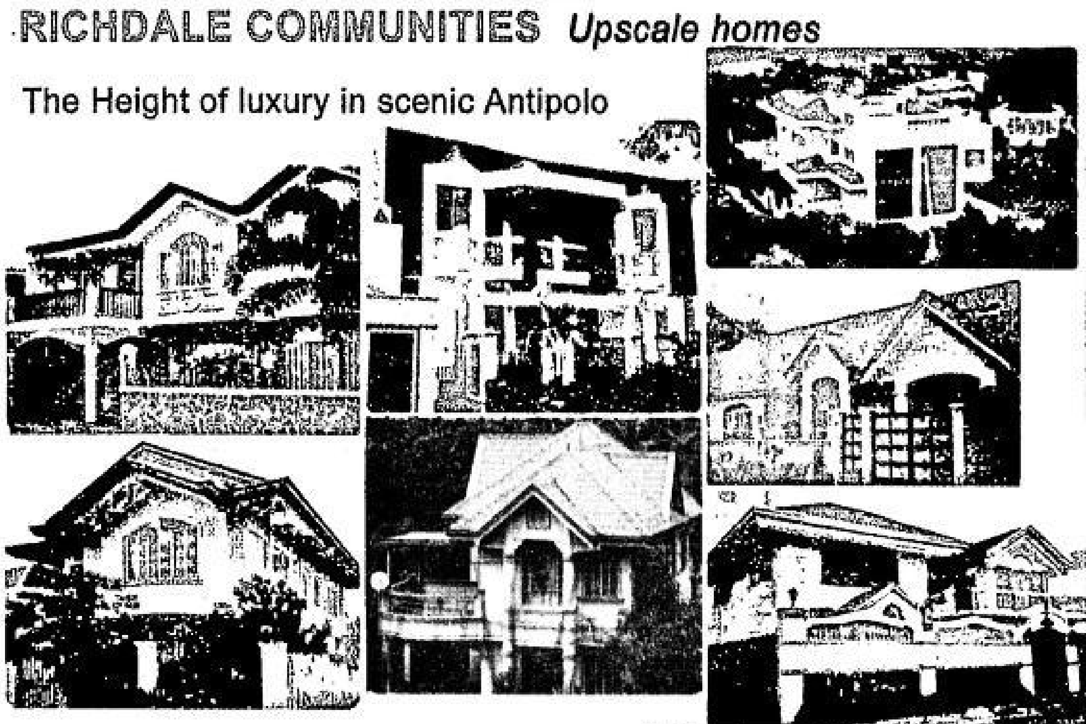
GOLDENDALE BUSINESS and LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PARK

Medium-Rise Architecture on Valuable Land



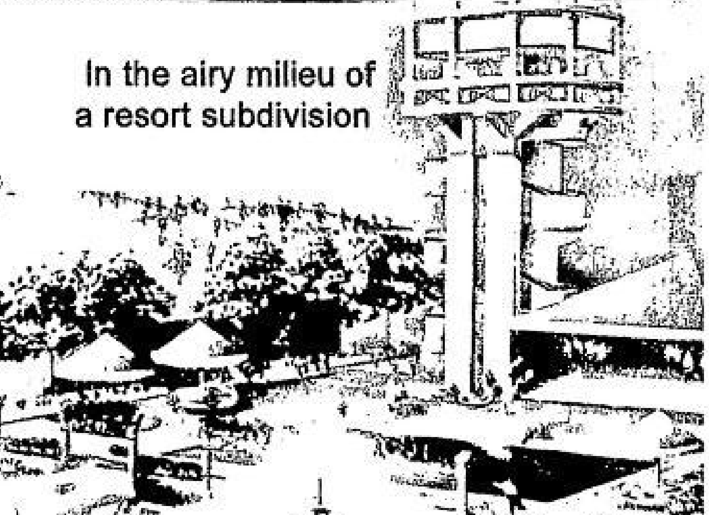
RICHDALE COMMUNITIES *Upscale homes*

The Height of luxury in scenic Antipolo



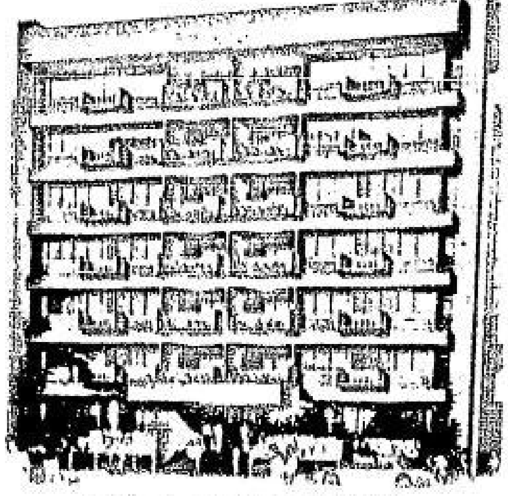
Your daily vacation at home

In the airy milieu of a resort subdivision



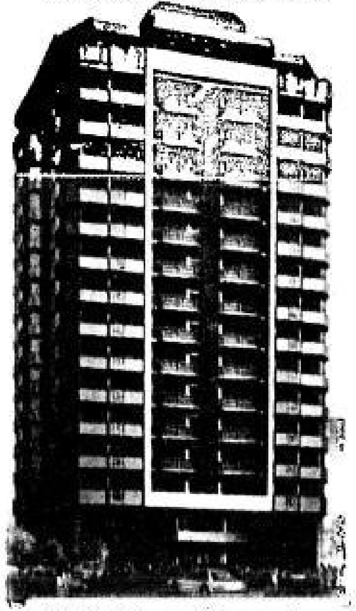
CONDOMINIUM COMMUNITIES *In very prime locations*

Chartreuse Garden renamed Doña Angela Building



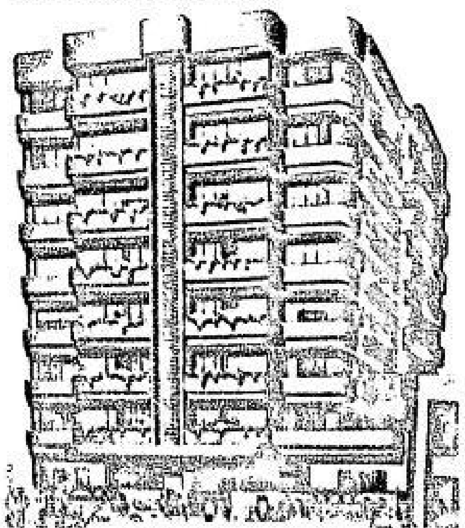
in Legaspi Village

Greenrich Mansion



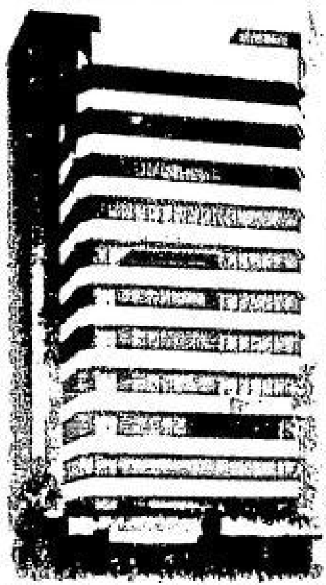
in Ortigas Complex

Richbelt Terraces



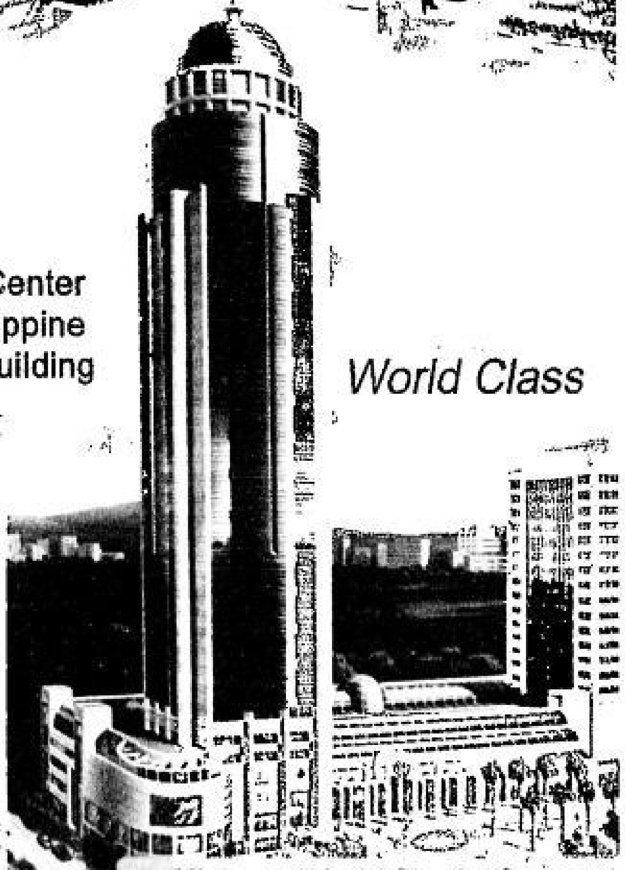
within Greenhills

Corporate Center renamed Philippine International Trade Building



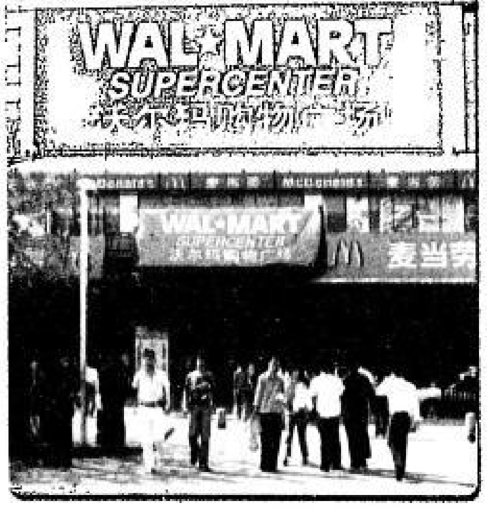
in Salcedo Village

World Class



Xiamen World Trade Center beside Xiamen Railroad Station

COMMERCIAL COMMUNITIES *Hosting Internationally Renowned Brands*



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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang
Text us your feedback: inquirer mtr name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

TWO hybrids that should be alike end up quite different.

Prius, Civic hybrid run

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

(Conclusion)

ONE OF THE FEATURES OF the 2006 Civic Hybrid is its IMA (Integrated Motor Assist)-only cruising mode. Under certain constant speed driving, the gas engine "coasts" and the vehicle is powered using the IMA motor only. In this case, the IMA takes over when the vehicle is cruising consistently at 50 kph. That means, however, that the driver has to use the cruise control mode found on the steering wheel to keep the speed constant.

We never did get to try this IMA-only mode with the Civic Hybrid. The stop-and-go conditions made this impossible.

The gauge for the IMA battery charge level lights up when the IMA battery is being charged; the IMA level gauge lights up when the engine is receiving IMA.

Work in combination

When the gasoline engine and the electric motor work in combination, the Civic's power peaks at 110 hp at 6,000 rpm, with a max torque of 123 lb-ft at 2,500 rpm (Gasoline engine carries 95 hp at 6,000 rpm, the electric motor 20 hp/2,000 rpm).

Both the Prius and the Civic harness regenerative braking (by rechanneling the braking energy to charge the electric motor engine). It is worth noting that when the Civic hybrid vehicle comes to a stop, the engine enters into an "auto stop" mode and shuts down completely to save fuel (the tachometer needle drops to "0"). The IMA battery, in this instance, provides electric power for the lights, air con and other electrical components. The IMA motor restarts the engine automatically

PRIUS/ B2-4

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HIGH INTENSITY DISCHARGE LAMPS

Parts from PHILIPS

Benefits:
- Low Power Consumption
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Most reasonably priced based on Warranty Cost per Month!

XENONWORX 27 MONTHS WARRANTY QUALITY PROOF

Certificate From PHILIPS

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3000K	AMBER YELLOW
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5000K	MILD YELLOW
6000K	DAYLITE WHITE
8000K	ZIRCONIUM WHITE
10000K	SAPPHIRE BLUE
12000K	TURQUOISE BLUE
14000K	AMETHYST BLUE
16000K	TOPAZ PINK
18000K	EMERALD LITE GREEN
25000K	TANZANITE LITE BLUE

(ONE PRICE FOR ALL COLOR TEMPERATURES)

WATER RESISTANT!
As seen in a demo where a bulb set was submerged in an aquarium during the 1st CAMPI Auto Show at the World Trade Center & Manila Auto Salon Exhibit 2007 at the SMX Convention Center

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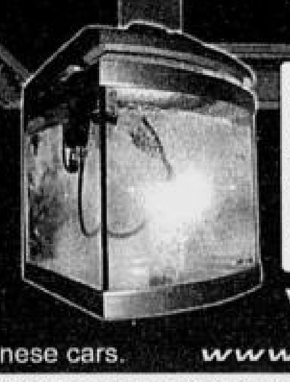

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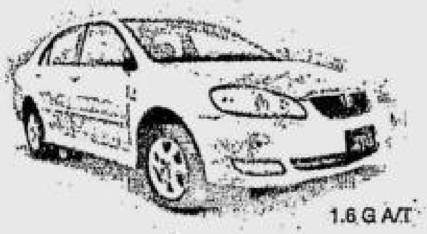

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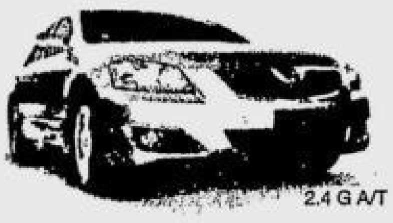

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TOYOTA moving forward

Testing tires at Bira

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE BIRA INTERNATIONAL RACING Circuit, named after a Thai prince who was the only Formula One driver of his country, is located some 15 kilometers from the resort town of Pattaya. It was there last week that Goodyear brought motoring journalists from eight Asian countries including the Philippines to test the newest premium product of its Wrangler line, the Wrangler HP (High Performance)/AW (All-Weather) tire.

Goodyear created the Wrangler line in 1977 specifically for 4-wheel-drive sport utility vehicles and light trucks. As surveys have shown that the majority of SUV/4x4 owners rarely venture off-road, Goodyear developed three kinds of Wrangler products: those for mainly on-road use, for on-road/off-road and for mainly off-road.

The Wrangler HP/AW belongs to the mainly on-road category and was designed for upscale SUVs and light trucks that through the years have become more luxurious and more powerful. As the HP and AW initials identifying this product imply, it aims for luxurious comfort, smooth ride quality and low road noise in all driving and weather conditions aside from strength, excellent wet and dry handling, superior traction and stability.

Latest technologies

To achieve these goals, Goodyear incorporated its latest technologies in the Wrangler HP/AW such as Silent Block design, SilentArmor Technology, SmartTRED Weather Reactive Technology, All Weather silica tread compound, a deeper, wider groove geometry and staggered shoulder notches.

The Silent Block design reduces tire noise and enhances ride comfort via angular centerline blocks and linked shoulder elements. SilentArmor Technology, featuring a lightweight, noise-absorbing layer reinforced with DuPont Kevlar, which is five times stronger than steel, contributes further to a quiet ride. Goodyear's SmartTRED Weather Reactive Technology combines a soft tread center for grip and traction on slippery, wet roads with a solid shoulder block for stability in emergency braking and wet handling.

Meanwhile, the All Weather silica-enhanced tread and sidewall compounds improve wet grip and braking and help reduce fuel consumption via better cohesion, durability and rolling resistance. Groove geometry featuring deep and wider grooves speeds up water dispersal and resists aquaplaning while assuring stable handling and off-road grip. Staggered shoulder notches increase mud evacuation which translates into improved off-road traction.

3 tests

To prove that all these were not mere techno-blabber, Goodyear conducted three comparative demonstration tests on the Bira circuit front straight. In the pass-by noise test, a Toyota Fortuner shod with the tires of a leading competitor was driven at a constant speed of 40 kph past an external microphone which recorded the tire noise level. Then another Fortuner fitted with Wrangler HP/AW tires did the same pass-by thing. In both cases, a journalist witnessed the microphone reading. Result: Goodyear tires recorded 66.4 decibels (dB) and the competitor, 66.9 dB.

The interior noise test had an internal microphone recording the noise level inside each vehicle as it passed at a constant speed of 40 kph over a series of large ropes on the track, with one journalist asked to witness the mike reading inside the car. This test demonstrated the effectiveness of the tires in absorbing road impacts, generating less interior noise and providing better ride comfort. Results: Goodyear recorded 75.3 dB while the competitor recorded 76.0 dB.

In the wet braking test, a vehicle equipped with Goodyear Wrangler HP/AW braked on a wet track from a speed of 80 kph and a cone was placed to mark the stopping point. Then the tires were changed with those of the leading competitor, using the same vehicle to avoid any discrepancies in braking power. Results: the vehicle shod with Wrangler HP/AW tires stopped at 32.9 meters from starting point while the competitor's stopped at 35.3 meters.

Self-drive

After these demo tests, Goodyear allowed the motoring media from various nations to discover for themselves the high-speed, wet braking and chicane performance of the Wrangler HP/AW on the Bira circuit. This was followed by self-drive activities using vehicles fitted with Wrangler AT/SA (All Terrain/SilentArmor) tires, which are classified as on-road/off-road tires.

The steering precision, lateral grip and general balance of Wrangler AT/SA tires, as well as the driving skills of some journalists, were tested using an Isuzu D-Max pickup on a timed slalom course of 10 cones. To prove the effectiveness of the Wrangler AT/SA as a mixed service product, journalists were also invited to drive or ride 4x4 vehicles shod with these tires on an off-road course near the karting track.

Summing up, the Wrangler HP/AW Asia-Pacific launch was a day well-spent at the Bira International Racing Circuit for the motoring journalists and the Goodyear people alike. The only thing I regret is forgetting to ask, during the briefing, the Philippine retail price of the Wrangler HP/AW.

THE STAR of the show: Goodyear's Wrangler High-Performance (HP) All-Weather (AW) tire for SUVs

GOODYEAR Wrangler HP AW tires fitted on an Isuzu D-Max demonstrated their driveability on a slalom track.

THE WET braking performance of Goodyear Wrangler HP AW tires was demonstrated using a Toyota Fortuner.

(PHOTOS BY TITO HERMOSO)

GOODYEAR Wrangler Silent Armor tires proved their off-road capabilities.

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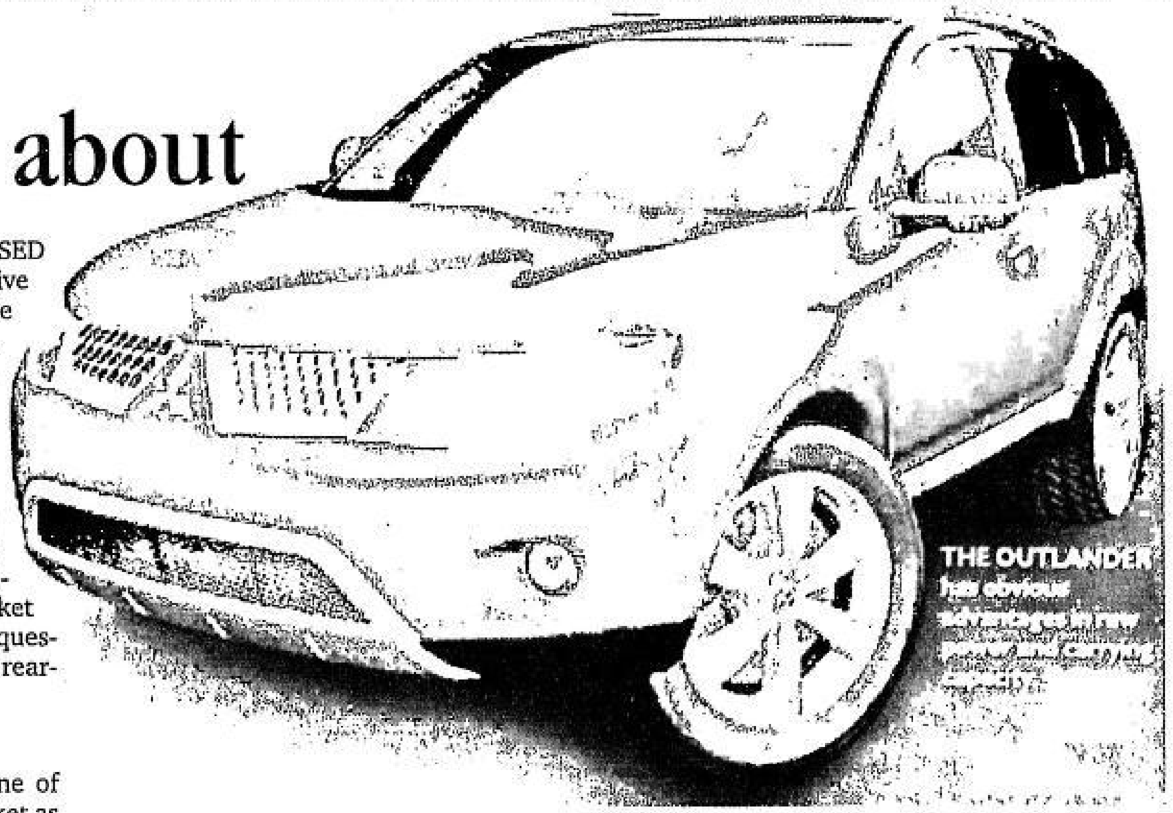
Out and about



MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

COMPACT SUVS AREN'T WHAT THEY USED to be anymore. First of all, the size adjective "compact" is more than just a label these days as this genre of automobile is physically getting bigger. Along with the increase in chassis size, engine displacements are following suit.

Prices too have increased, logically following the additional space and power that is now available across this product niche. If you really think about it, compact SUVs are dangerously beginning to tread closer to the premium market segment. It has gotten to the point that questions of true relevance and real value are rearing their ugly but necessary heads.

Size difference

The 2007 Mitsubishi Outlander is one of these compact SUVs that prowl the market as one of the bigger and out-right meaner examples of the genre. First thing that gets you is the obvious size difference with other cars in the segment. Without checking the spec sheets of the competition, it is easy to come up with an initial assessment that this may be the longest, widest and tallest compact SUV in the market today.

It follows that interior space is substantial as well. One finds himself/herself asking why there is no third row of seats, a question that is actually quite funny—that's how big this five seat SUV looks at first glance. Five extra large adults will fit fine in the Outlander, with each of the passengers not having to deal with invasions of their all important personal space. Again, this compact SUV seems just that large.

To go with all that extra weight that accompanies the Outlander's outsized girth is an engine that is well endowed as well. Under the long hood lies a 3.0-liter, V6 powerplant with their proprietary Mivec (Mitsubishi Innovative Valve timing Electronic Control) system. In simple terms, one gets 220 bhp and 280 Nm of torque via naturally aspirated engine thankfully equipped with variable valve timing. Pull begins low in the rpm band and becomes linear at around 4,000-rpm. Mind the massive torque steer please and when you need to rotate your tires every so often, don't say you were not warned.

OUTLANDER

Tooling about Metro Manila in the Outlander is thankfully not as violent as the engine experience. Suspension leans toward giving the passengers a comfortable ride, a design decision likely meant to offset the inevitable lurching and bobbing that will occur when untrained drivers first encounter the tip in torque of the able engine.

Most rewarding experience

The flipside of the suspension being tuned for comfort is that pushing the Outlander may not be the most rewarding of flat-out driving experiences. Big powerful engines necessarily need chassis and suspensions that can cope with the increased speeds and hyperactive acceleration. In this case, the Outlander is no Evolution, despite the manufacturer's hints at some sort of shared DNA between the two.

Fuel efficiency suffers too because of the added performance. The factory installed fuel consumption meter, if accurate, tells quite a tale. Flat out, pedal to the floor pan driving yields sessions that average to around 4 km/liter while keeping efficiency in mind and babying the accelerator gave a highest reading of 6.8 km/liter. There might be some that are unfazed by such consumption but most of us motoring mortals will likely find those numbers painful.

As with any vehicle choice, the Outlander has its ups and downs, the pluses and minuses so to say. In this compact SUV, buyers will get obvious advantages in raw power and carrying capacity. The only trouble is that the Outlander package is really not entry level, in any sense of the term, anymore. Pricing, while competitive in the genre, is not really any sort of bargain. Add to that the cost of fueling this thirsty beast. You get what you pay for, as they say, and the best one can hope is that the Outlander is really what you are looking for.

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emman Cena

What's with the hybrids?

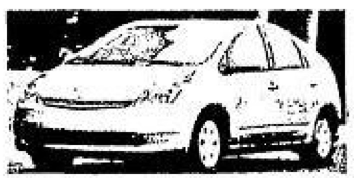
THE CONCEPT OF HYBRID cars originates from the automotive industry's thrust of giving the motorists the option of fuel economy, without hampering the vehicle's efficiency.

According to hybridcars.com, any vehicle is a hybrid when it combines two or more sources of power. Hybrid cars run off a rechargeable battery and gasoline. Therefore, any vehicle that combines two or more sources of power that can directly or indirectly provide propulsion power is a hybrid. Most hybrid cars on the road right now are gasoline-electric hybrids.

So what are the benefits of using a hybrid car?

Aside from the fact that hybrids reduce fuel consumption compared to conventional vehicles, they are also more durable. One can observe there is a reduced wear on the gasoline engine and reduced wear on brakes from the regenerative braking system use.

Hybrids also work quietly, reducing noise emissions from substantial use of the electric motor at idling and low speeds.

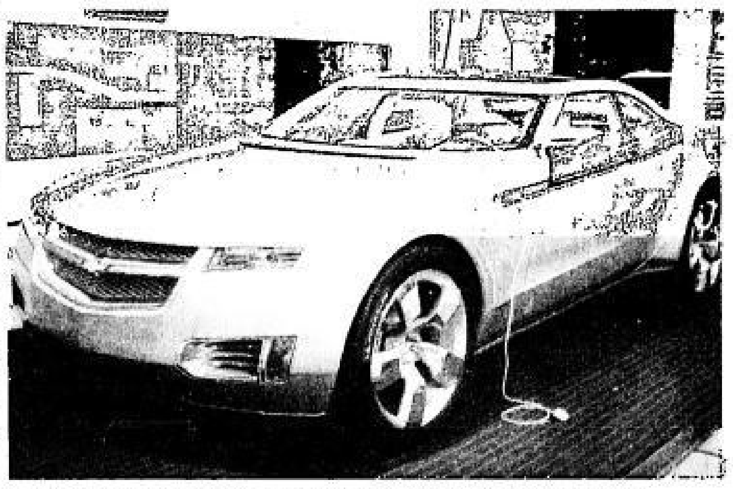


PRIUS, considered the No. 1 selling hybrid vehicle

While hybrids are usually more expensive, than conventional vehicles due to extra batteries, more electronics and in some cases other design considerations, there is actually a trade-off in paying the price.

A January 2007 analysis by intellichoice.com shows that hybrid cars will save their owners money over a five-year period. A report in the Greeley Tribune says that over the five years it would typically take for a new car owner to pay off the vehicle cost differential, a hybrid Camry driver could save up to $6,700 in gasoline at current gasoline prices

References: http://auto.howstuffworks.com/hybrid-car.htm, http://www.hybridcars.com/



CHEVROLET Volt, an example of a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle, is shown at the Washington Auto Show. It is expected to set a new benchmark.

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2007 4WD Pajero:
Still a true-blue SUV

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

WITH ALL THE ATTENTION afforded to the latest crossover vehicles—those which possess the style and space of a sport utility but offer more car-like ride—one could be forgiven into thinking that rock-climbing four-wheel-drive SUVs may finally be on their way out of the market for good.

The situation is also compounded by the fact that the market is getting negative impressions about the SUV for being unsafe while traveling at faster speed, fuel guzzlers, prone to rollovers... the list goes on.

However, there will always be a segment of the market that will always love getting behind big, burly and high-riding SUVs.

"What if car manufacturers improve on the SUVs attributes, improving the safety features and enhancing the performance?" said Arlan Reyes of Mitsubishi Motor Philippines Corp.

DESPITE ITS RUGGED look, the 2007 4WD Pajero is nimble on the road.

Indeed, this is what Mitsubishi has done with its latest four-wheel-drive Pajero.

Experiencing improvements

A couple of weeks ago, this writer was able to try the GLS gasoline variant of the 2007 4WD Pajero (there's also a 3.2-liter common-rail direct-injection diesel variant which costs P2.688 million) and experienced firsthand what are these improvements.

For starters, the GLS is now fitted with a larger, 3.8-liter Mitsubishi innovative valve-timing electronic control (Mivec) V6 powerplant that produces 247 horsepower.

This engine is paired to a 5-speed automatic transmission (with Sportronic manual shift gate) and to a 4WD transfer case that allows the driver to shift from two-wheel drive to 4WD without stopping.

Lighter

Aside from the new drivetrain, the 2007 Pajero also has a much lighter but stronger monocoque chassis as well as an aluminum hood and a new 6-spoke 17-inch alloy wheels.

The resulting weight reduction truly complemented the engine and is much evident acceleration as well as when negotiating curves, uphill climbs, potholes, or driving fully loaded.

As with the previous model, the fourth-generation Pajero offers seating for seven though the third row of seats should be best left for emergency applications.

Factory-fitted

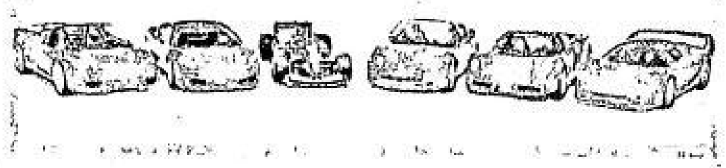
Another feature that occupants of this P2.588 million SUV would appreciate is the factory-fitted Rockford Fosgate.

Complementing this high-end brand of automobile sound equipment is a multi-information display monitor that occupies the center of the all-black dashboard with wood and silver accents.

Safer ride? Mitsubishi equipped the 2007 Pajero with Mitsubishi Active Stability Traction Control that improves the vehicle's stability and acceleration performance on a wide variety of surfaces.

The vehicle also offers six airbags, features antilock brakes (that prevents wheel lock when the driver suddenly brakes) that is paired with an electronic braking distribution system that modulates braking forces between front and rear wheels to provide maximum braking performance.

THE 2007 4WD Pajero: performance and safety enhanced



6 Ferrari two-speed cars making waves at Shell

IN CELEBRATION OF THIS year's Formula One Championship and to cap off its 60th anniversary celebration with Ferrari, Pilipinas Shell recently launched its unique premium promotion. This allows loyal Shell motorists to own their very own Ferrari model car and celebrate with Shell, Kimi Räikkönen, Felipe Massa and the rest of the Formula One team as well as race like a champion right here in the Philippines.

Shell has developed a set of six limited edition Ferrari two-speed cars featuring Ferrari track and road cars from the past 60 years. These include the Ferrari Enzo, the F430, the 575 Superamerica, the 360 Spider, the F50 and the Ferrari F1 racer. With the unique two-speed, pull-back mechanism of these one-of-a-kind model cars, Shell motorists can experience the exhilarating thrill of Shell V-Power in action.

Collect 6 models

Getting your own Ferrari is simple! From Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, simply add P49 for every purchase of P500 worth of Shell V-Power or Shell Helix Ultra products and choose one of the six Ferrari cars. You can also join the fun by purchasing P500 worth of Shell Super Premium, Shell Super Unleaded, Shell Super Unleaded E10, Shell Diesoline Ultra all with new fuel economy formula, and Shell Helix (Helix Plus, Super and Diesel) products. Simply add P99 to your fuel or lubes purchase and take home your very own Ferrari.

Sammy De Guzman, vice president for Shell Retail Philippines, said, "We are honored to continue our long-standing partnership with Ferrari and to celebrate it with our loyal Pinoy motorists. Our heritage with Ferrari has been a key component in our fuel development, providing millions of everyday motorists around the world and here in the Philippines with the driving experience they deserve. With our promotion, we hope to bring out the kid in all of us and enjoy these limited edition Ferrari model cars this coming holiday season!"

More power

Shell V-Power, successfully launched in the Philippines in July 2006, contains Shell's unique Friction Modification Technology (FMT), the same technology used by the Ferrari team in Formula One races, which is designed to help keep engine parts working smoothly, improve acceleration, and give you better movement.

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Prius, Civic . . .

From page B2-1

when the brake pedal is released.

The Prius has an EV mode button which gives the driver full-time electric power for speeds of up to 50 kph for as far as 3 km, or depending on the battery charge levels.

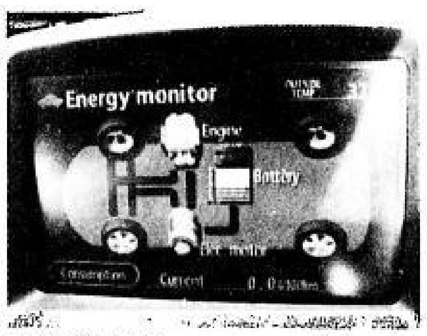
'Rough' fuel test

All these technical aspects aside, the very purpose of hybrids, of course, is to save the planet precious liters of fossil fuel one trip at a time. That is why we waited with bated breath for the results of our "rough and unofficial" fuel test runs. We called this rough and unofficial because a truly precise fuel run would involve a P500,000 fuel meter device called a "fuel pet" (attached to the fuel line, the device would measure in real time how much fuel was being consumed).

To get a fairly consistent reading, we turned off the engines at the fuel stations for at least 30 minutes before fuel loading to allow the fuel lines to cool. Markers were set on the station floor for the test vehicles to be accurately positioned come fuel reloading time. And then we instructed the station attendants to fill the vehicles up to the absolute brim of the gas tank, and wait for the fuel to settle before declaring the tank full.

The Prius had a fuel consumption rating that ranged from 13 to 35 km per liter (on driving conditions we describe as 80 percent in city traffic and 20 percent highway drives). The Honda Civic Hybrid registered fuel consumption ranging from 11 to 11.45 km per liter. According to Honda, a recent Department of Energy-initiated fuel run on the Civic hybrid came out with the following results: 16 km per liter on a city leg; 30.15 km per liter on a highway run; and 33.87 km per liter on another highway leg.

In a previous INQUIRER Motoring fuel run pitting the Prius with a 1.5-liter Toyota Vios (straight gasoline engine setup) and a 1.3-liter Vios fitted with an LPG fuel system, we got the following fuel test results: On highway drive, the Prius' mileage yielded about 27 km/liter, the Vios 1.5 around 20 km per liter. In city drive the Prius registered 20 km per liter, the 1.3 Vios LPG gave out 12 km per liter.



STRIKING Prius screen monitor says it all

MILD HYBRID. This 1.3 Civic has i-DSi (dual sequential ignition), VTEC (Variable valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control) and IMA (Integrated Motor Assist).

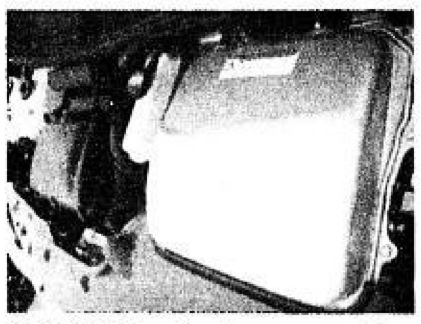
Toyota Motors Philippines, which is still studying the date of Prius' local introduction, estimates that the introductory price of the hybrid would fall between P2 million and P2.5 million (no tax incentives yet).

Should the Civic Hybrid have a local release, Honda pegs its hybrid to cost between P1.6 and P1.8 million (with no tax incentives).

Hybrid types

The Civic Hybrid, along with its popular hybrid siblings Insight and Accord, is dubbed a "parallel mild hybrid" while the Prius is a full hybrid. In hybrid terminology, a full hybrid is often used when the vehicle can launch forward at low speeds without consuming any gasoline. In this case, the Honda hybrids can't.

Mild hybrid cars move from a standstill only if the internal combustion engine is engaged, and use the electric motor primarily to assist the gas engine when extra power is needed. The IMA hybrid system of the Civic Hybrid is just one type of mild hybrid cars.



THE PRIUS engine bay: no space for ordinary mechanics

Both these types require the use of the gasoline engine when reaching higher speeds (of about 32 to 40 kph or more, depending on how the car is driven).

The Civic Hybrid's interior changes are hardly noticeable. We had to look closely to notice a small space compromised to accommodate the hybrid's battery pack at the trunk space (just behind the rear seat). A cooling air vent is visible at the back of the rear passengers' head rest revealing the "possible" location of the battery pack.

Hybrids have been commercially available in other countries for a decade already. With these two different hybrids plying the streets of Manila—a Prius full hybrid which during this particular test displayed more fuel efficiency than the Civic mild hybrid (although we weren't able to factor in the cost of long-term maintenance, our wild guess for higher maintenance cost would be Prius), the two car manufacturers have at least started the ball rolling.

Judging from total strangers who approached us and asked how these hybrids fared on Metro Manila's streets, their costs, their operating systems, and so on, INQUIRER Motoring surmises that the local market is ready to embrace hybrids. It's just that when we mention the price tag of these hybrids, the faces of those interested go blank, as if their brains suffered a power outage. So, would tax breaks jumpstart some serious buying propositions?

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Chief of Correspondents **Pam Pastor**

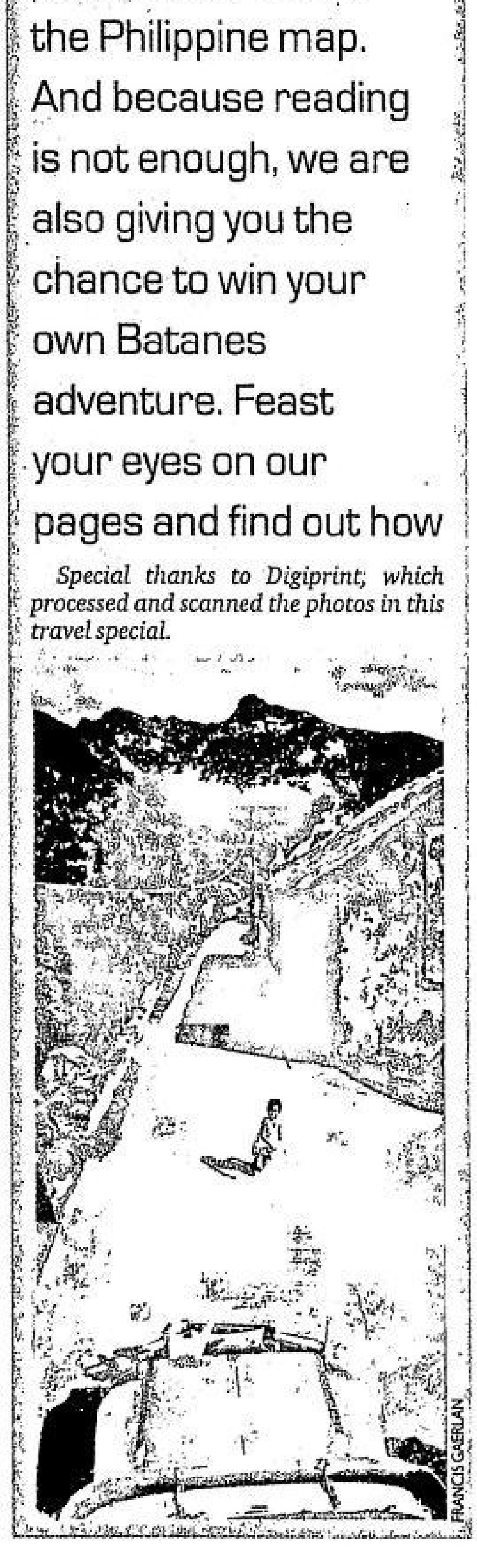
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

2bU! goes to Batanes

Asian Spirit invited 2bU! and LomoManila to visit breathtaking Batanes and find out just how beautiful the northernmost tip of our country is. We climbed a lighthouse, stalked cows, tried not to roll down hills, rode boats, saw dolphins, bought goodies at the Honesty Café, and met many friendly kids in a crazy whirlwind tour that lasted barely three days.

With our stories and lomographs, we take you on a similar tour around what some call a virtual dot on the Philippine map. And because reading is not enough, we are also giving you the chance to win your own Batanes adventure. Feast your eyes on our pages and find out how

Special thanks to Digiprint; which processed and scanned the photos in this travel special.



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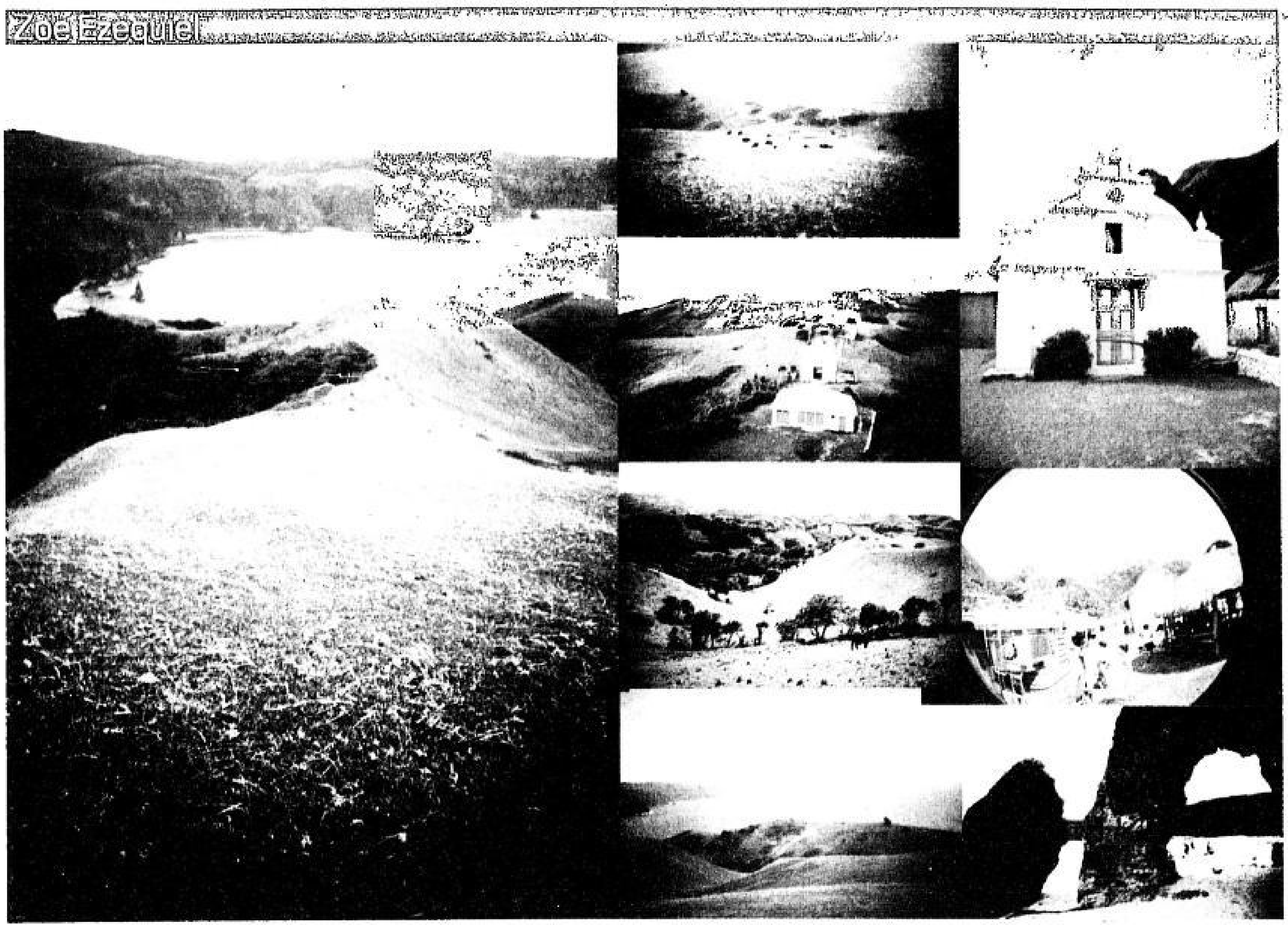

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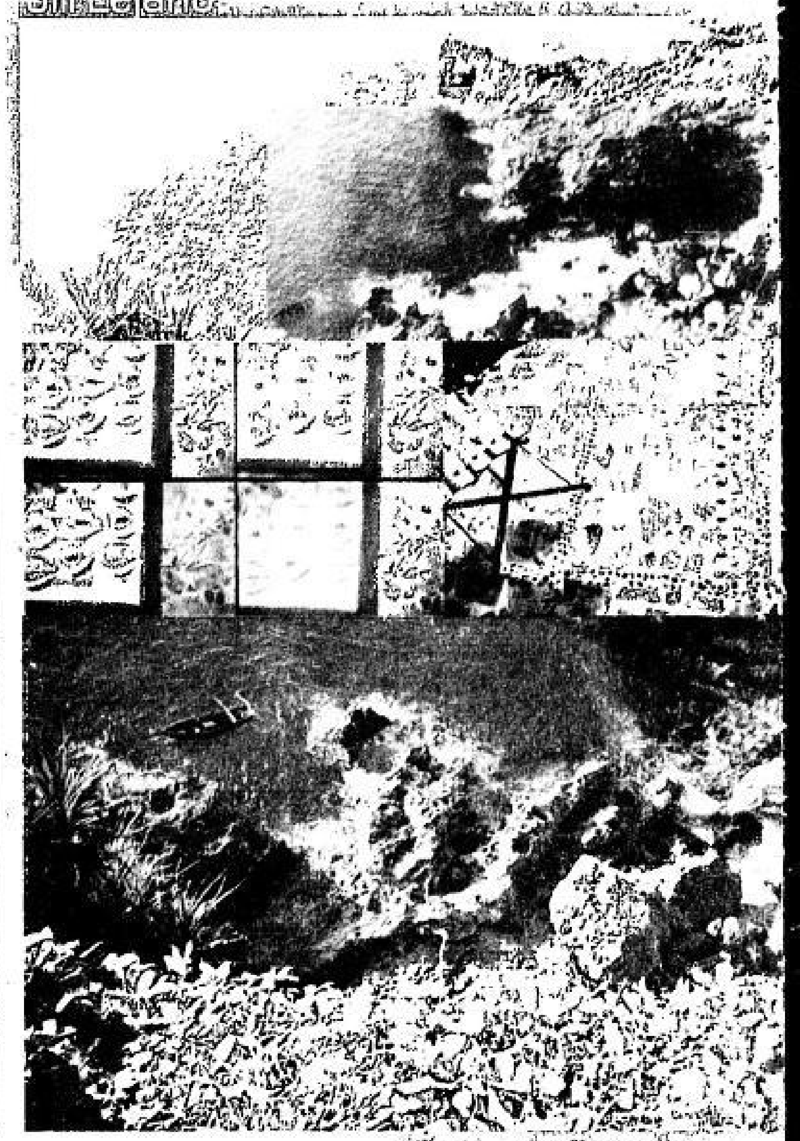


High on Batanes

The place is beautiful—undeniably so, even when you are high on anti-motion sickness medicine

By Pam Pastor

YOU RETURN FROM every trip with more than just dirty clothes and the ubiquitous souvenir. You arrive home carrying lessons and realizations—that the immigration people in South Korea aren't exactly friendly, that pesos are worthless in India, that stores close way too early in Wellington, that street food in Shanghai can offer major surprises, that Arizona weather is so dry it can make your nose bleed.

Batanes taught me one thing—that two nights and barely three days are not enough to explore its beauty. Believe me, we tried.

We arrived in Batanes one Thursday morning, still bleary eyed from the successful attempt to power nap aboard our Asian Spirit flight. I was with Zoe Ezequiel, Francis Gaerlan, Mon Guinto, Jill Lejano, Jolorence Santos and Melanie Vicente, skilled lomographers from LomoManila. We were greeted by the majestic sight of Batanes clouds and Basco's quaint little airport.

We checked into Seaside resort which was simple but comfortable. We had beds, television, a fridge and a water heater. We didn't need much else.

Our first stop was the Philippine Information Agency where we got a quick introduction to Batanes. We were told about how the place is sometimes left out of Philippine maps. It is, after all, just a virtual dot at the northernmost part of the country.

Necitas Alconis told us about the possibility of certain areas in Batanes becoming Unesco World Heritage sites. And it's no big surprise. After all, people sometimes refer to Batanes as the place "where time stood still."

Still pretty much untouched by Western culture, the Ivatans have managed to maintain their culture and keep their traditions alive.

"Still keeping to our classic traditions and inherited customs, Ivatans are proud that we have not been carried away by the monotony and homogeneity of modern culture," said Alconis.

We spent the next couple of days seeing just that.

Rolling greens

On day one, we explored Batan Island, visiting the lighthouse, pushing the limits and trying to see how close we could get to the cows without annoying them (and the answer is, very close), keeping our balance and making sure the strong winds didn't send us rolling down the hills.

Day two started really early. We were all up before 5 a.m. to catch the boat that would take us to Sabtang.

I spent the day high on Bonamine. If I stayed still for five minutes, I fell asleep. I slept on the boat, on the jeep, on the beach. It felt like narcolepsy at its finest.

But even in my drug-induced haze, I still couldn't deny the beauty of Batanes: the rolling greens of Marlboro Country, the clear skies and the mountains in the far distance, the water that sparkled in the sunlight, the cool wind that made me look like I could be the lead star of "The Lion King."

On the boat on the way back to Basco, I was snapped out of my daze by the sound of one of the boatmen clapping. Then I heard someone say, "Dolphins!"

And it's true, dolphins were gracefully slicing through the waves and leaping into the air. It was as if they were following our boat. I kept my eyes peeled, waiting for them to reappear, but soon, narcolepsy took over again.

I find it funny that people need to compare Batanes to other countries to convince other people of its beauty. Batanes looks like Ireland, Batanes looks like New Zealand, Batanes looks like Norway. Batanes looks like the Philippines. Hello, it is in the Philippines.

We took photos the entire time, from the moment our plane landed to the moment we boarded the flight that would bring us home. The truth is Batanes is so beautiful that even 3-year-olds can take awesome pictures there.

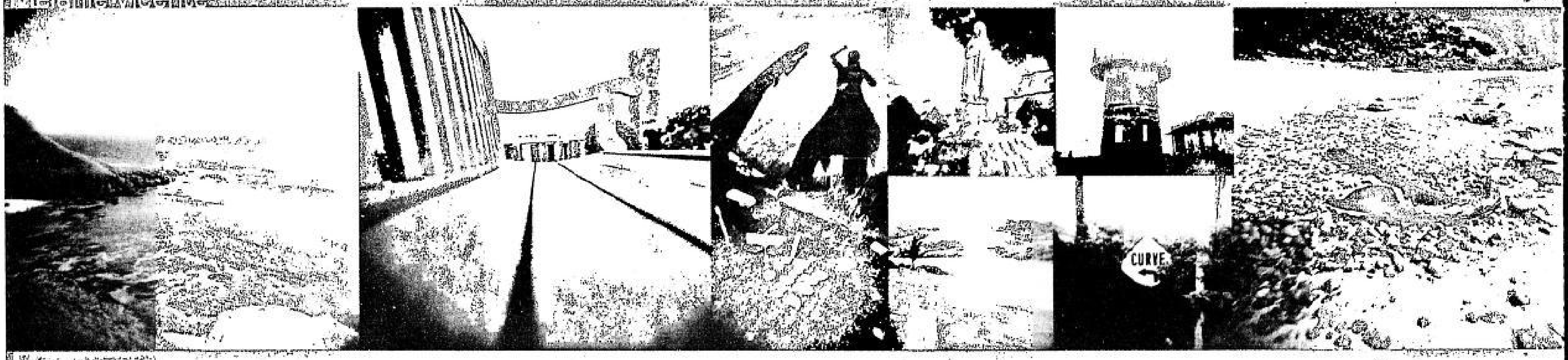
But the killer combination of over 20 toy cameras, rolls and rolls of film, and the skilled eyes of the lomographers resulted in more than just pictures. I call it magic.

I was wrong. Batanes did not just teach me one thing. There was a bigger lesson there—that short trips are made more memorable when you make the most out of your hours, when you fight drowsiness and when you share the magic of your experience with the people around you.

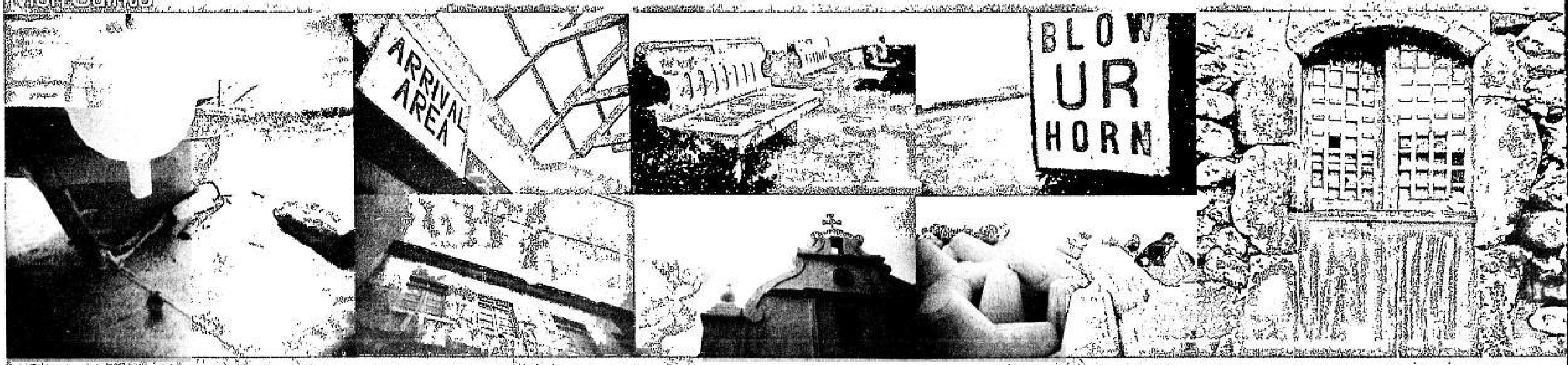
This is us sharing the magic of Batanes with you.

[illegible] Gaerlan

Melanie Vicente



Mon Guinto



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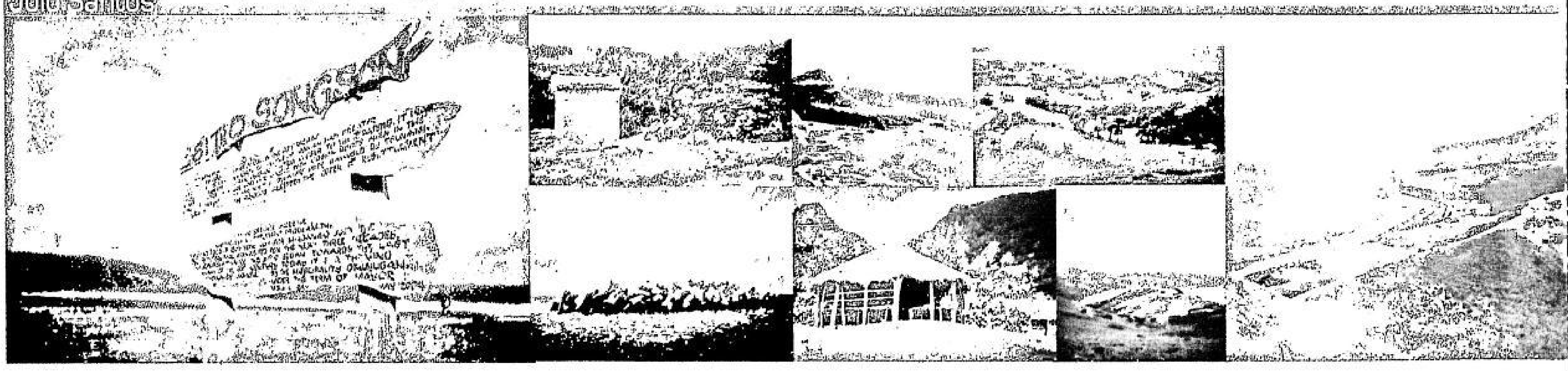
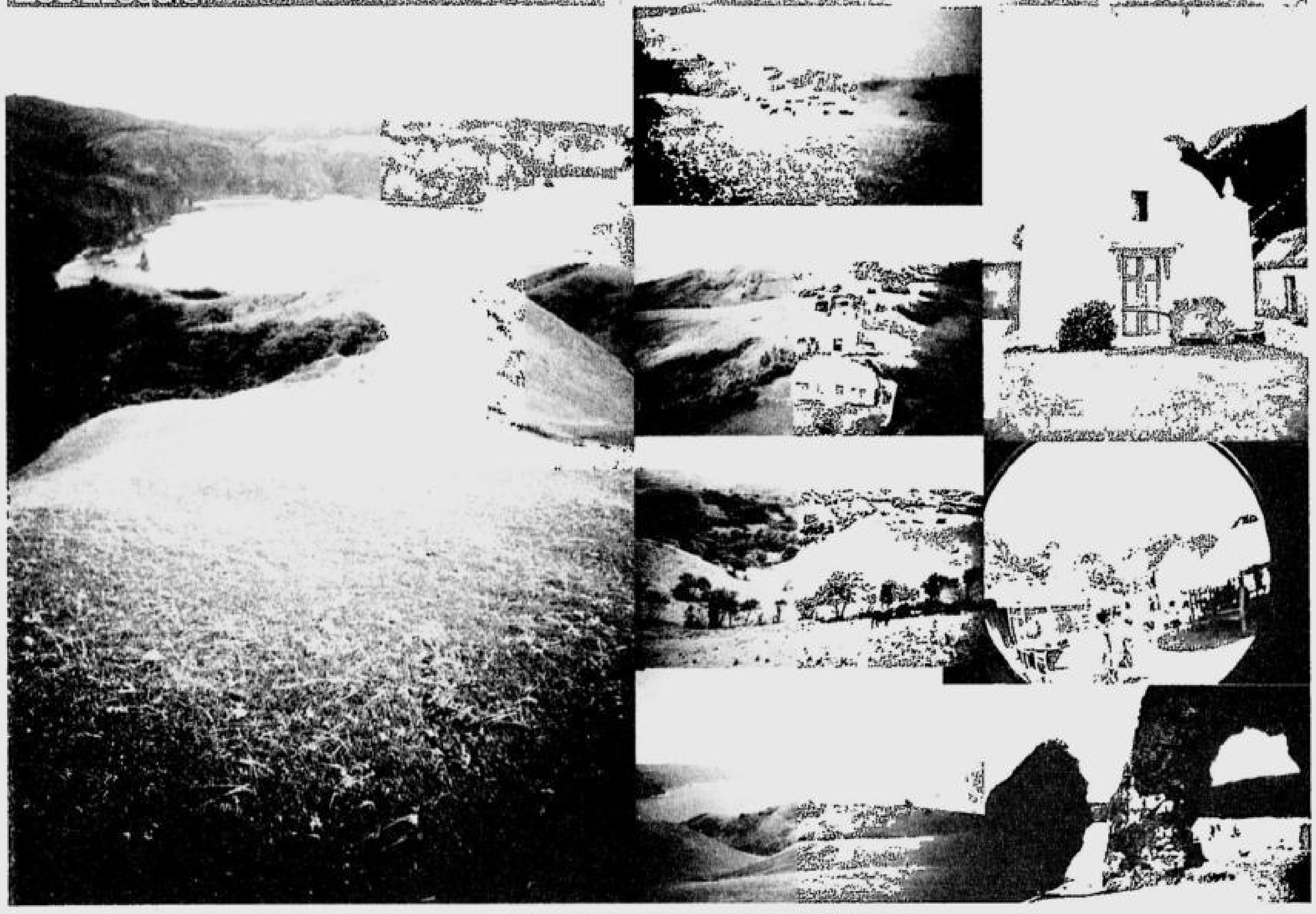


Zoe Ezequiel



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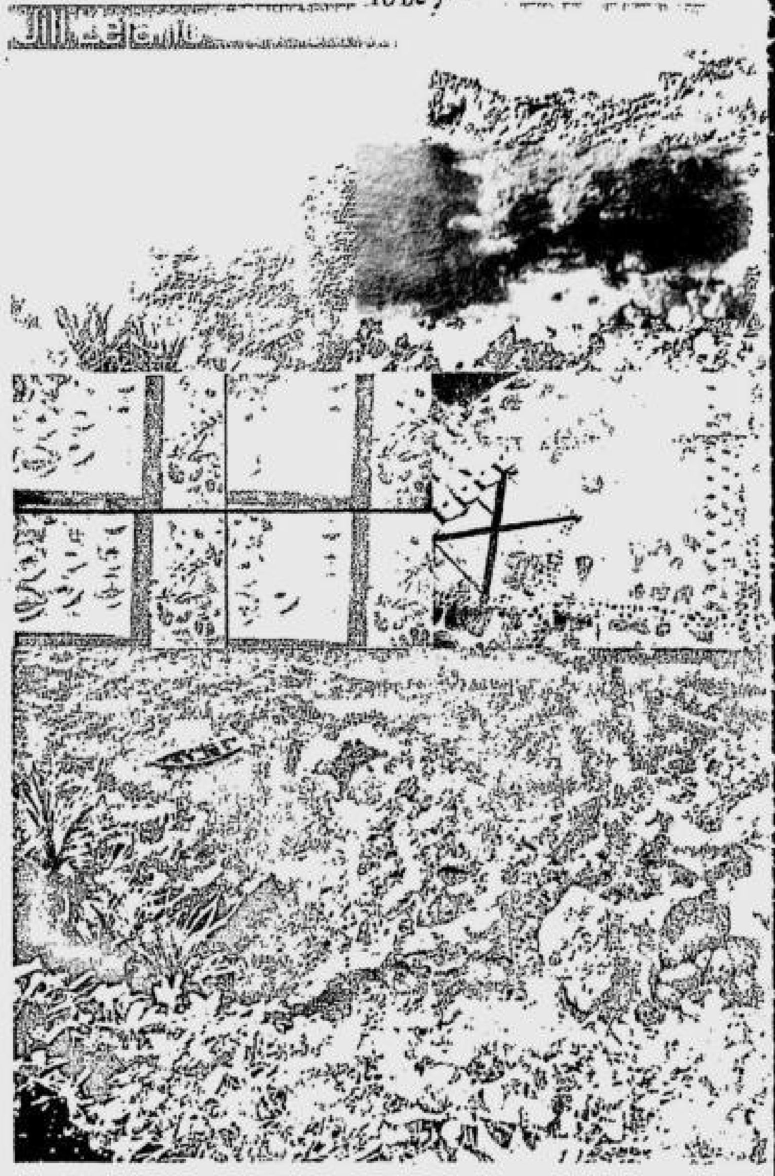

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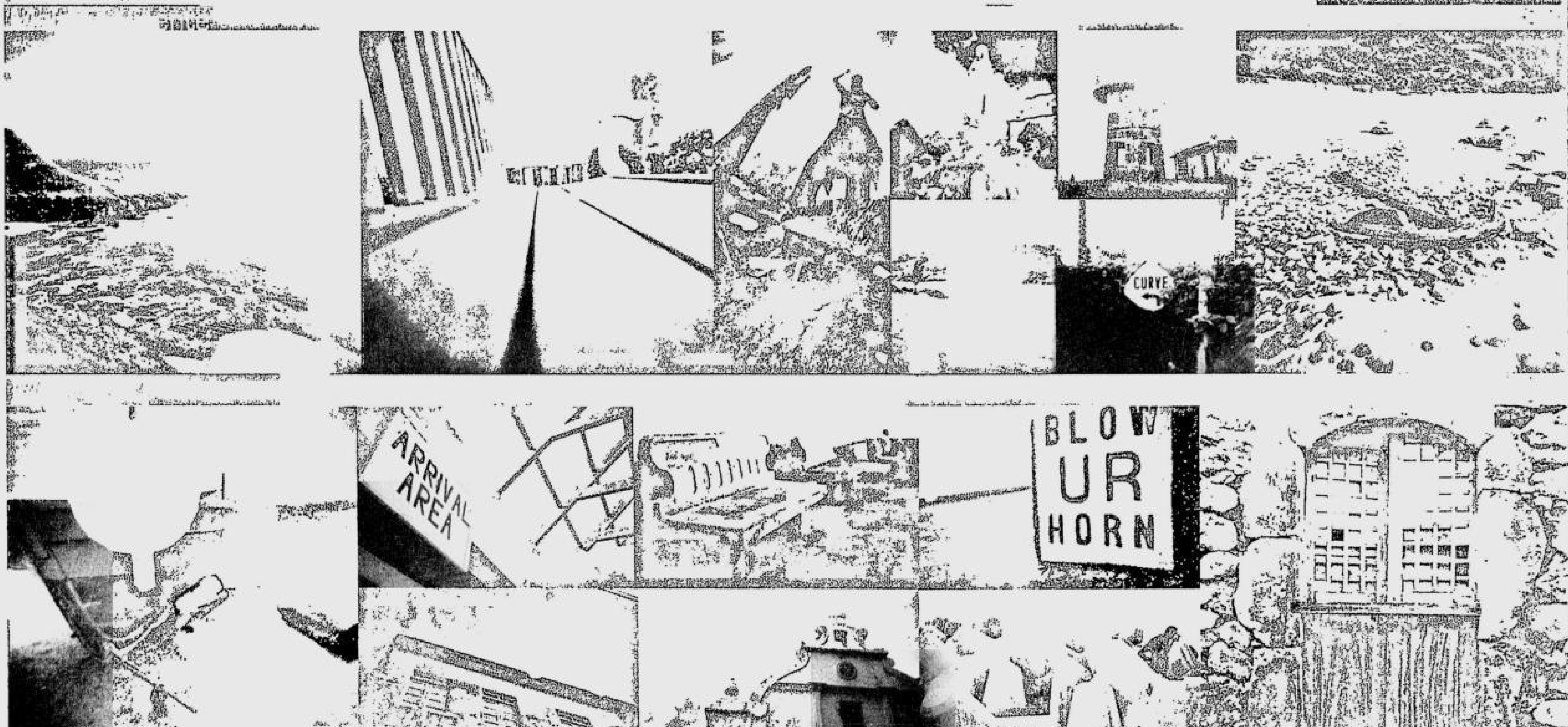

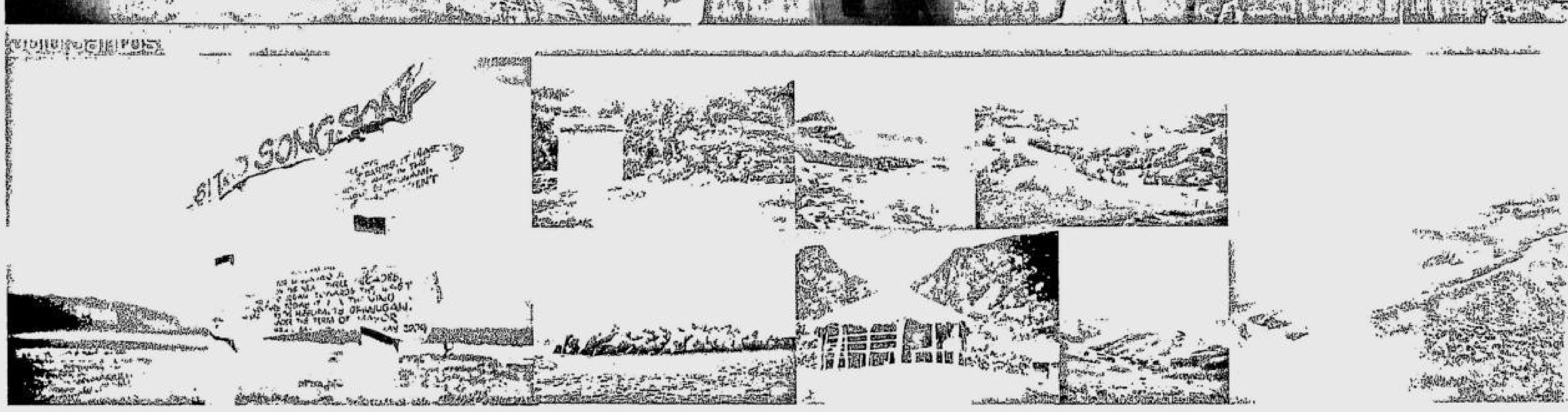

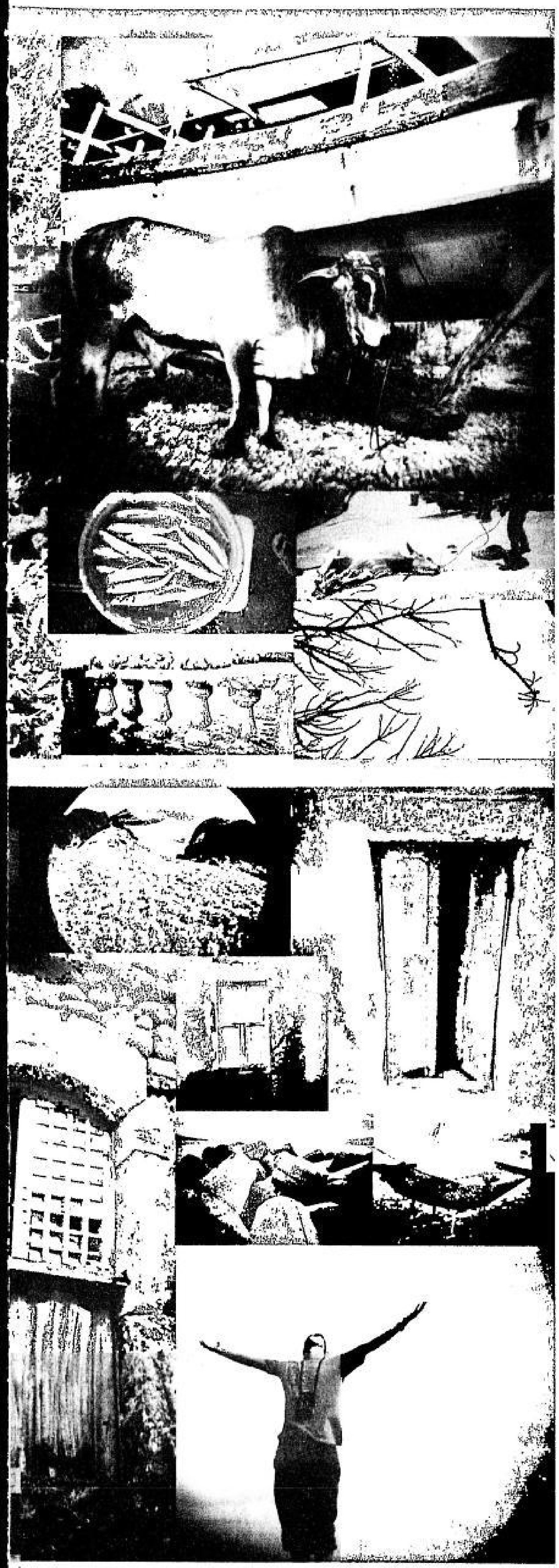

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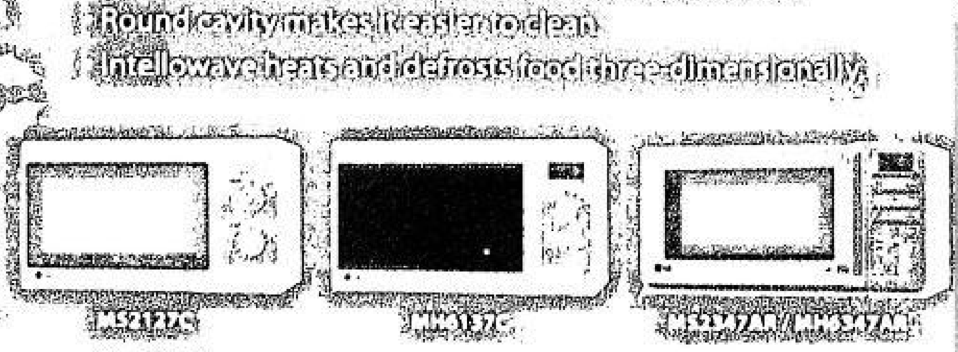

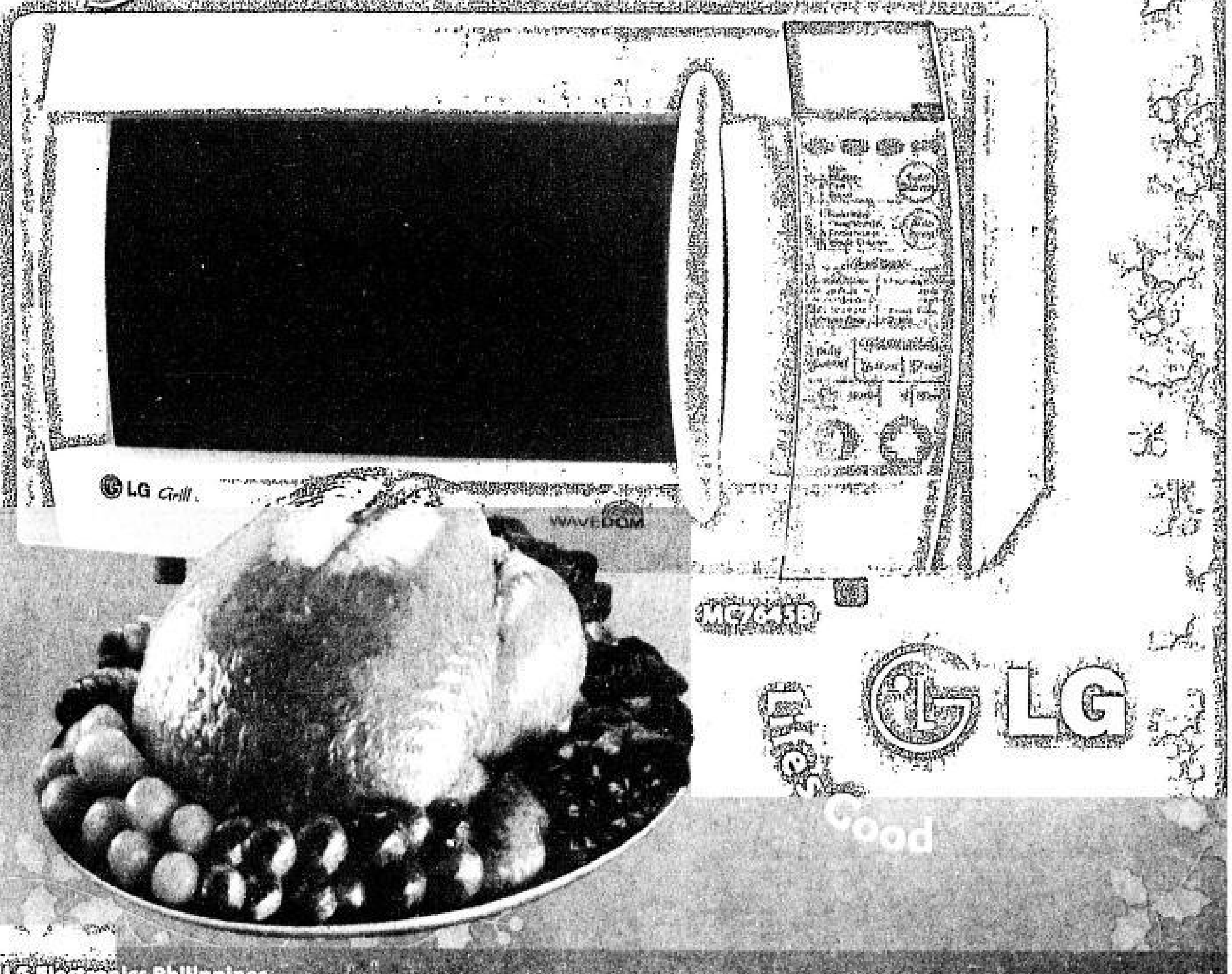

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Now you're speaking Ivatan!

BATANES 101. Necitas Alconis (center) introduces the province to the group. JILL LEJANO

Heading to Batanes? Clip this phrase box and communicate with the locals in their own language

YOU WILL HAVE no problems communicating with the people in Batanes. They speak Tagalog and English, no sweat. But it would be a good idea to immerse yourself in their culture even more by learning a bit of their language. Here are common phrases you will find useful.

Kapian kȧ pa nu Dios—Hello! God bless you. Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening.
Ango ngaran mo?—What's your name?
Ara ka mango?—How are you?
Tayto mapia—I'm fine.
Dino ngayan mo?—Where are you going?
Du nguya—There.
Diaya—Here.
Makey ka kuman?—Would you like to eat?
Mapteng—hungry
Ma-waw—thirsty
Yapu ka dino?—Where did you come from?
Avek dana—Goodbye.
Mavanah—tired
Masuyot—happy

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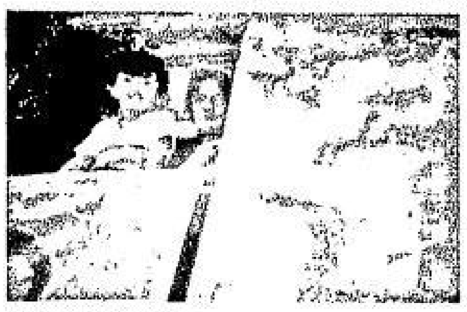
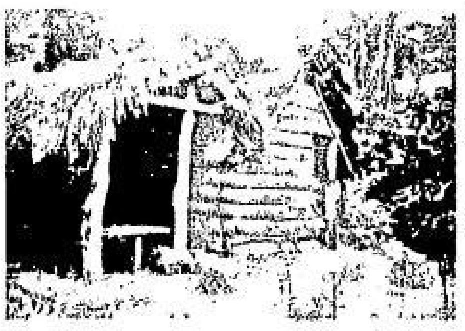


KIDS in Chavayan JILL LEJANO

Batanes in numbers

- 23,000—Batanes' land area in hectares
- 800 km—Batanes' distance from Manila
- 6—the number of municipalities in Batanes: Basco, Mahatao, Ivana, Nyugan, Sabtang and Itbayat
- 29—the total number of barangays in Batanes
- 2.5—the number of hours it takes to fly from Manila to Batanes
- 70—the number of hours it takes to sail from Manila to Batanes
- 15,656—the population of Batanes according to the 2000 Census
- 98 percent—the literacy rate in Batanes
- 80 percent—households with TV
- 99 percent—households with radio

Source: Exotic Batanes



AN IVATAN home FRANCIS GAERLAN

SOMETIMES the temperature drops to seven degrees. ZOE EZEQUIEL

Winter in the Philippines

A WHITE CHRISTMAS IN THE PHILIPPINES?

Not really—but the closest you can get is Batanes, where temperatures dip to as low as seven degrees.

The Ivatans experience a seasonal phenomenon foreign to most Filipinos: winter. Because Batanes is located between Taiwan and China, the cold winter breeze from both countries rolls over the islands in November, prompting a rare winter experience for locals and tourists alike right here in the Philippines.

A Batanes winter typically lasts from November to January. During this time, the island is transformed into a frosty frontier that lets tourists explore a new facet of the Philippines. In fact, Ivatan houses are made of at least one-meter thick walls made from stones held together by lime, and foot-thick thatched cogon roofs to protect them during the cold, cold months.

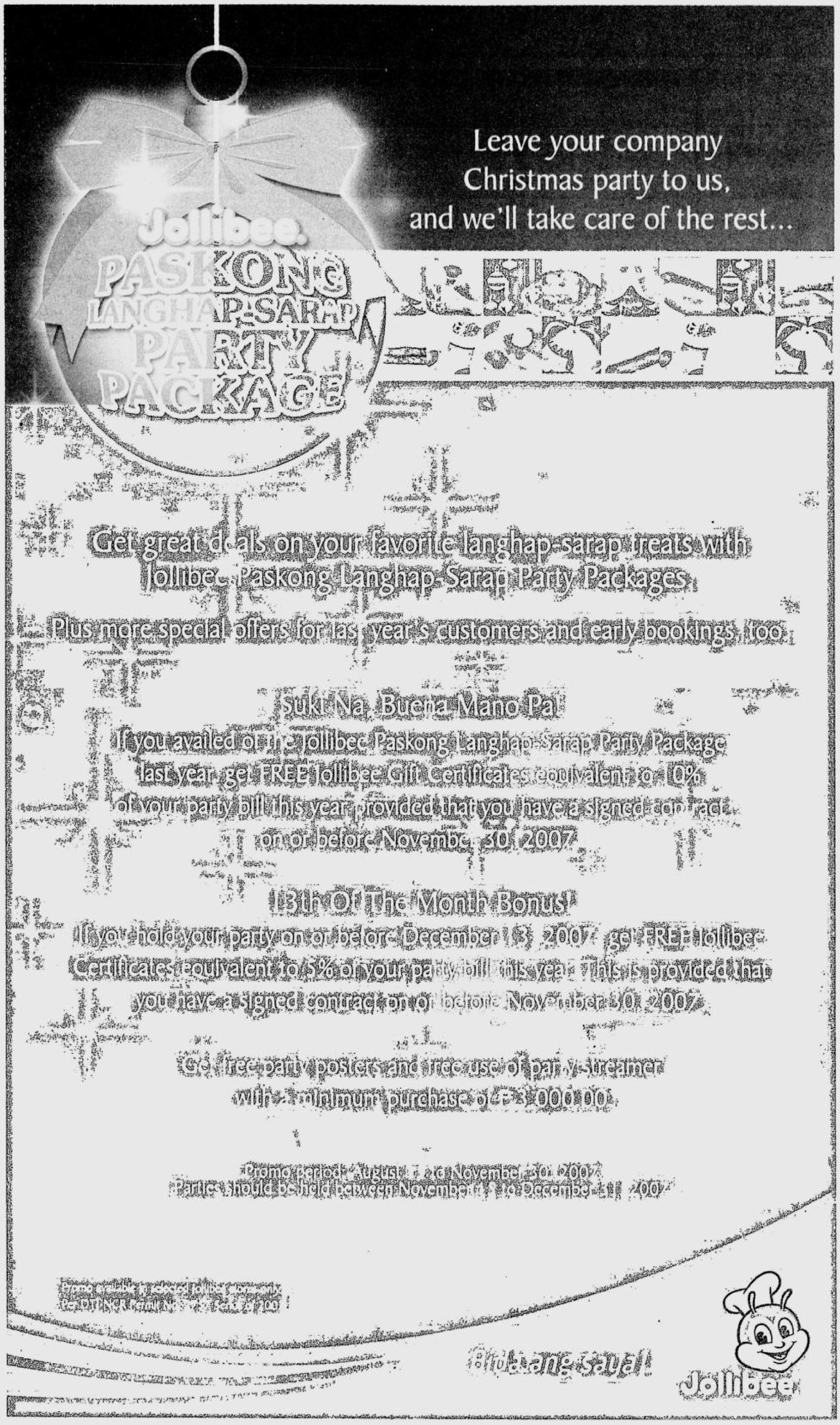
Now you're speaking [illegible]an!

BATANES 101. Necitas Alconis (center) introduces the province to the group. JILL LEJANO

Heading to Batanes? Clip this phrase box and communicate with the locals in their own language

YOU WILL HAVE no problems communicating with the people in Batanes. They speak Tagalog and English, no sweat. But it would be a good idea to immerse yourself in their culture even more by learning a bit of their language. Here are common phrases you will find useful.

Kapian ka pa nu Dios- -Hello! God bless you. Good morning. Good afternoon. Good evening.
Ango ngaran mo?—What's your name?
Ara ka mango?—How are you?
Tayto mapia- -I'm fine.
Dino ngayan mo?- -Where are you going?
Du nguya- -There
Diaya—Here.
Makey ka kuman?—Would you like to eat?
Mapteng—hungry
Ma-waw- -thirsty
Yapu ka dino? -Where did you come from?
Avek dana—Goodbye
Mavanah—tired
Masuyot—happy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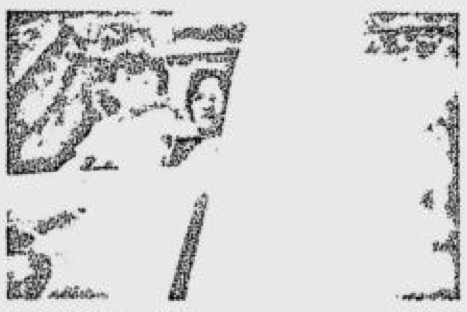
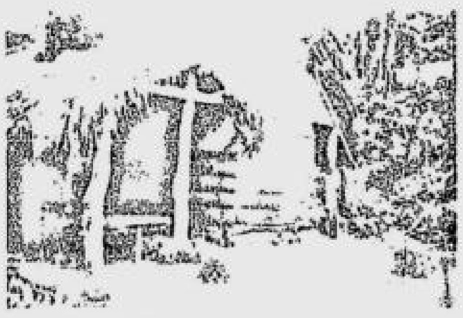


KIDS in Chavayan EJANO

- 23,000- Batanes' land area in ectares
- 800 km- Batanes' distance from Ma ila
- 6- ... ...nl of municipalities ane Basco, Mahatao, Ivana, Sab ng and Itbayat
- 29- total number of ar ng Batanes
- 2.5- number of hours it takes fly fro Manila to Batanes
- 70- number of hours it takes sail from Manila to Batanes
- 15,656- the population of ding to the 2000 Census
- 98 percent- the literacy rate in nc
- 80 percent ouseholds with TV
- 99 percent- useholds with ra ic

tic Batane



AN IVATAN home GAERLAN

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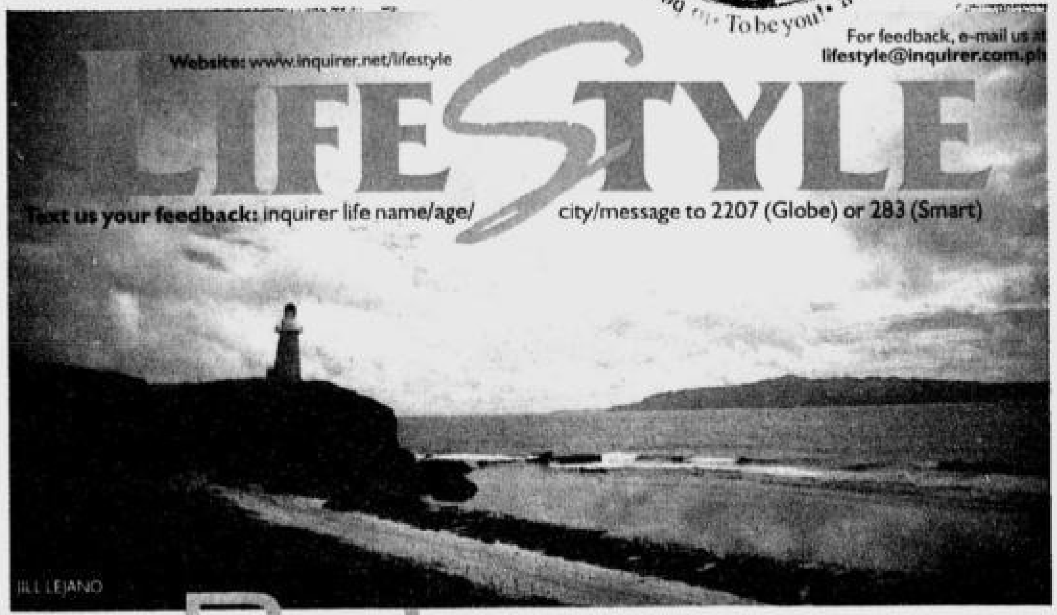


JILL LEJANO

Batanes on the big screen

AS PROOF OF BATANES' beauty, Adolf Alix and Ignite Media Inc. CEO Dave Hukom recently shot a full-length feature film aptly called "Batanes"—a first for the company, with the island as one of its "characters."

"The location is not just for show but is a character in the story," said the co-directors in a statement. They both agreed that the place should be left unspoiled and serene as it is.

Exclusive paradise

Written by Arah Badayos, the film is a love story between a Filipina and a Taiwanese and revolves around how the waters of Batanes test their love and individualities.

The "unpredictable weather or ocean is similar to a woman," said Alix, adding that people should watch the movie to see how this "man-versus-nature" relationship unravels.

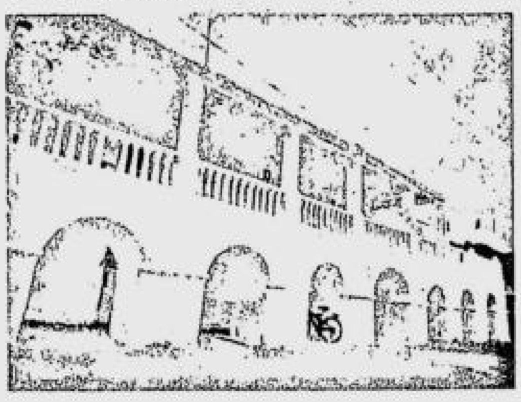
Hukom pointed out that the majestic beauty of Batanes lies in its green fields and the vast ocean that surrounds it. Seemingly nurtured and tended to by some divine force, the emerald island doesn't seem to have a bald patch.

"Batanes" the film, which stars Ken Zhu of Taiwanese boy band F-4 fame and actress Iza Calzado, promises not only to highlight the island's beauty, but also share a tale about how love can overcome language barriers and cultural differences.

Both Hukom and Alix praised the Ivatan people for their simplicity, kindness and honesty—virtues that will be celebrated on the big screen soon.

"Batanes" will be shown in SM, Ayala and Robinsons cinemas starting Dec. 5.

FRANCIS GAERLAIN



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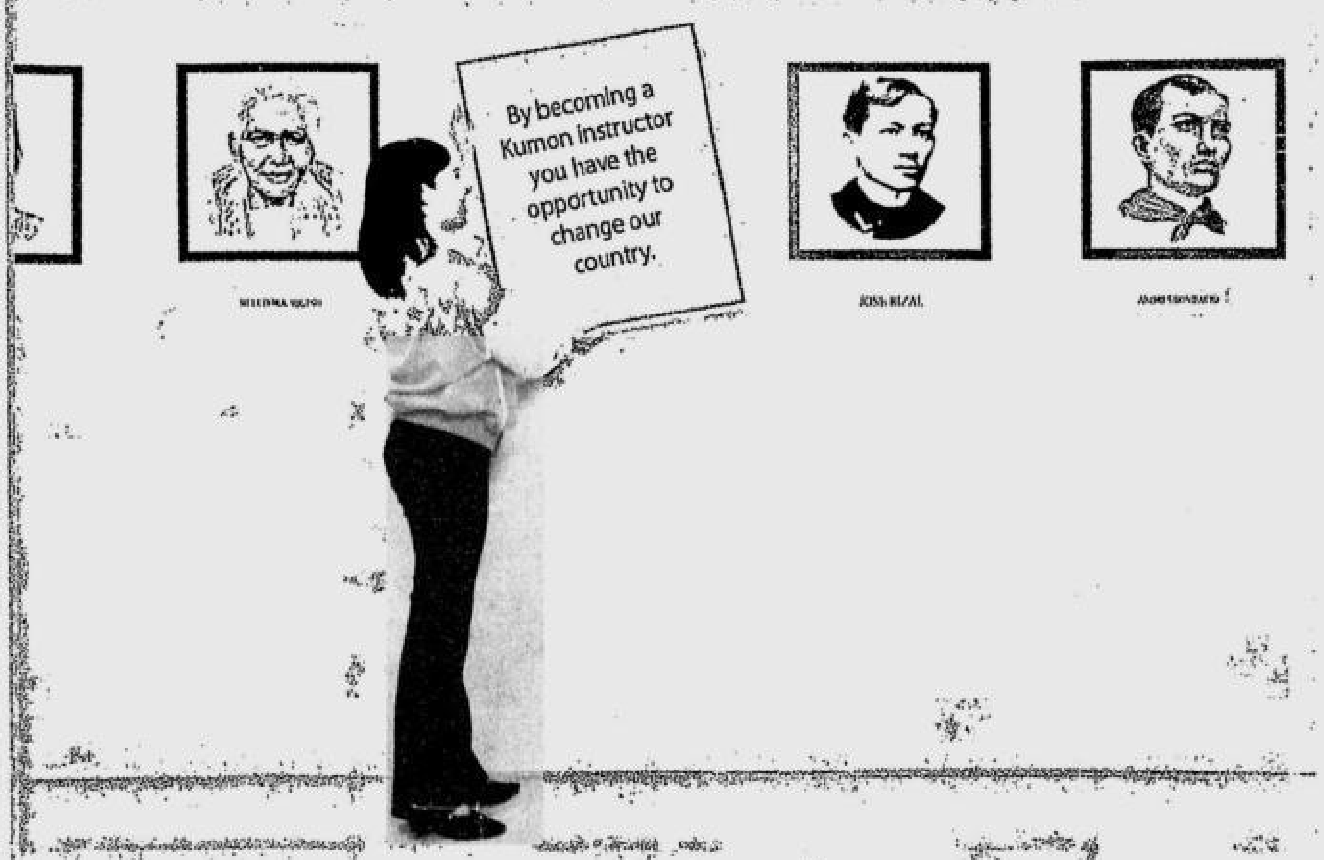
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JOSE RIZAL

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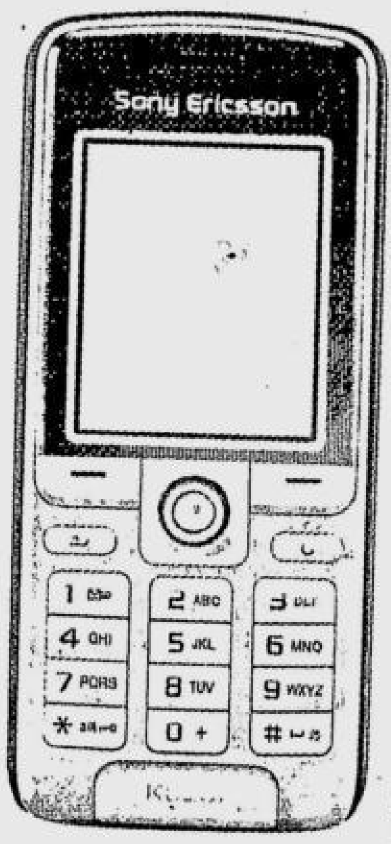

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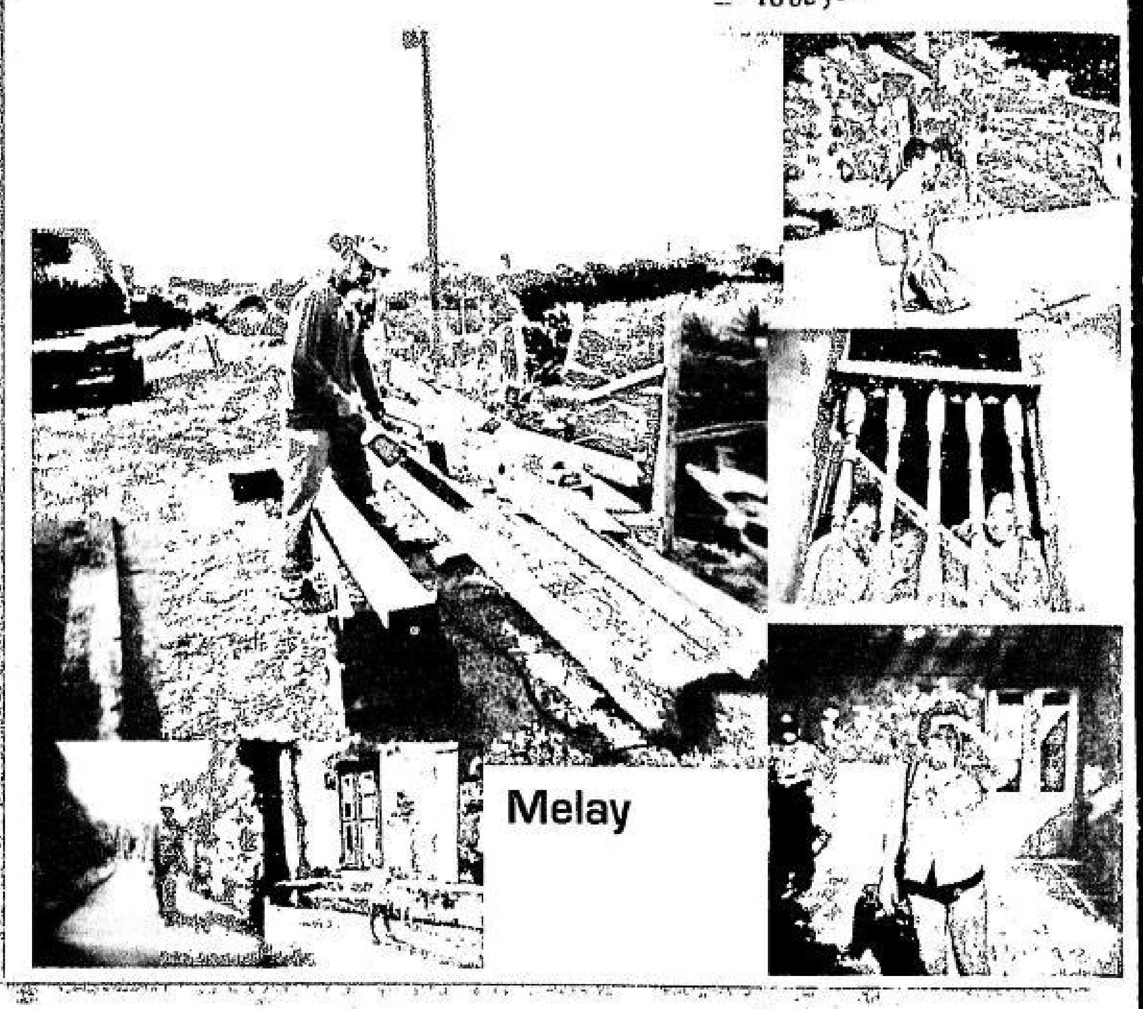
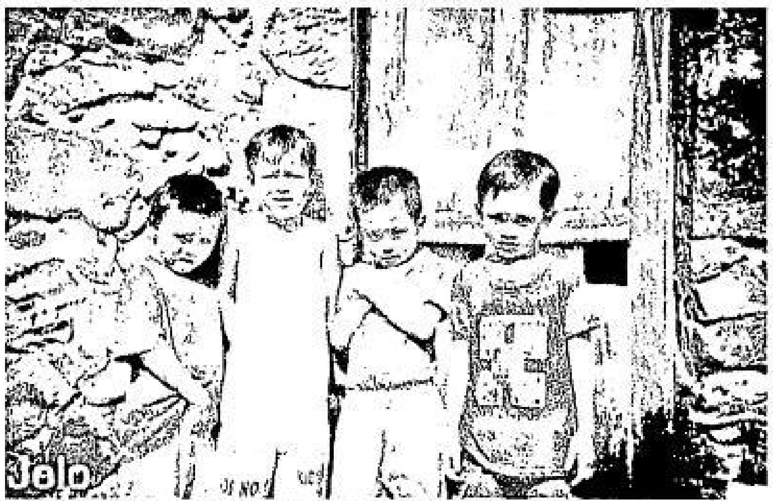
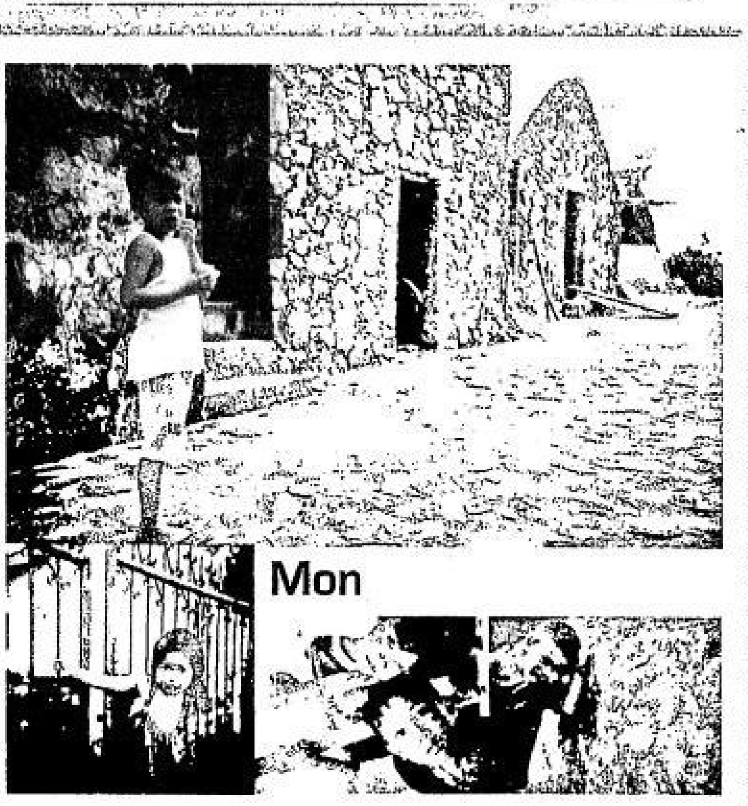


Melay

Peace-loving people



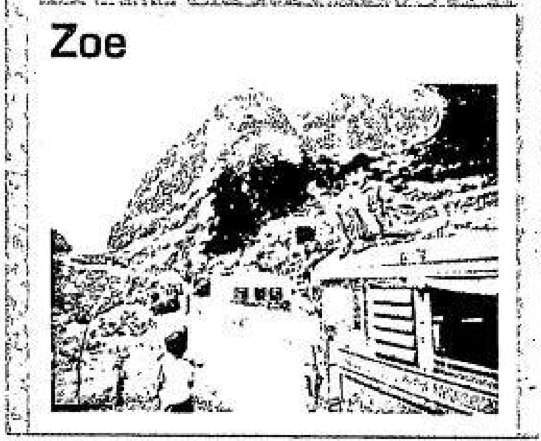
Jolo



Mon

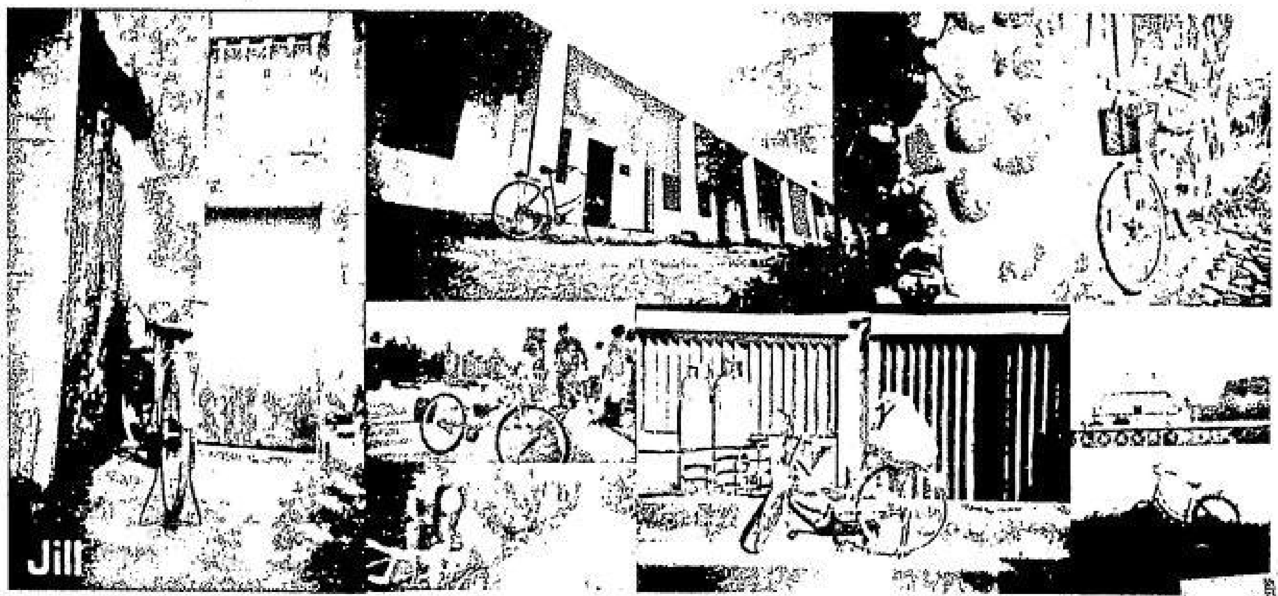
IVATANS ARE KNOWN FOR BEING peace-loving, which explains the extremely low crime rates in Batanes. Although we only had a little over two days to get to know the people of Batanes, we liked what we discovered. The children are polite, they greet you as they walk past you on their way to school. They are friendly, smiling readily for the cameras. The adults are kind—kind enough to offer their hand when you are scared about the wind sending you rolling down the hills. They are generous—enough to open their doors to virtual strangers and prepare a full meal for them. They are thoughtful—enough to end their disco night a little earlier than usual so that the visitors from Manila can sleep after a long day of exploring the beautiful place they call home.

PP



Zoe

Francis



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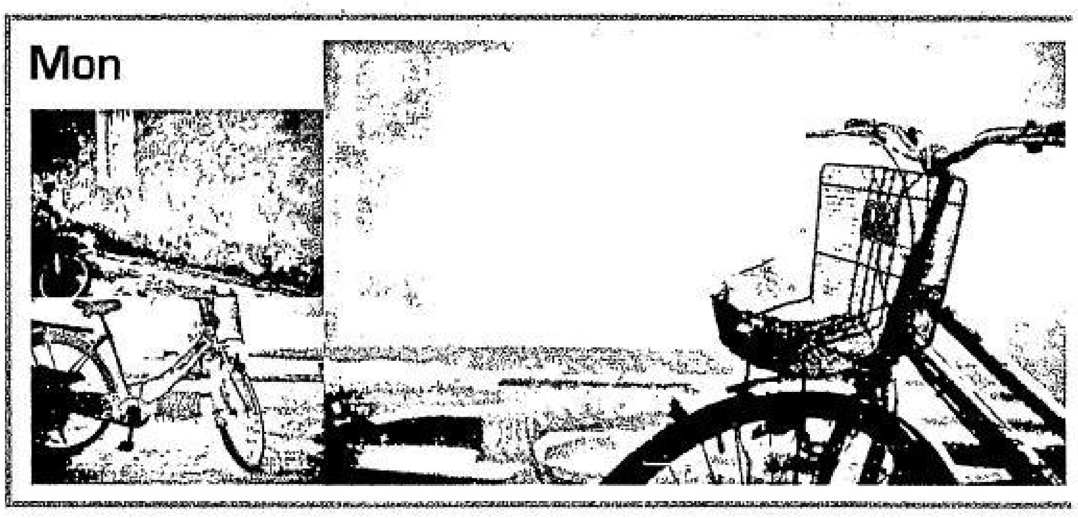

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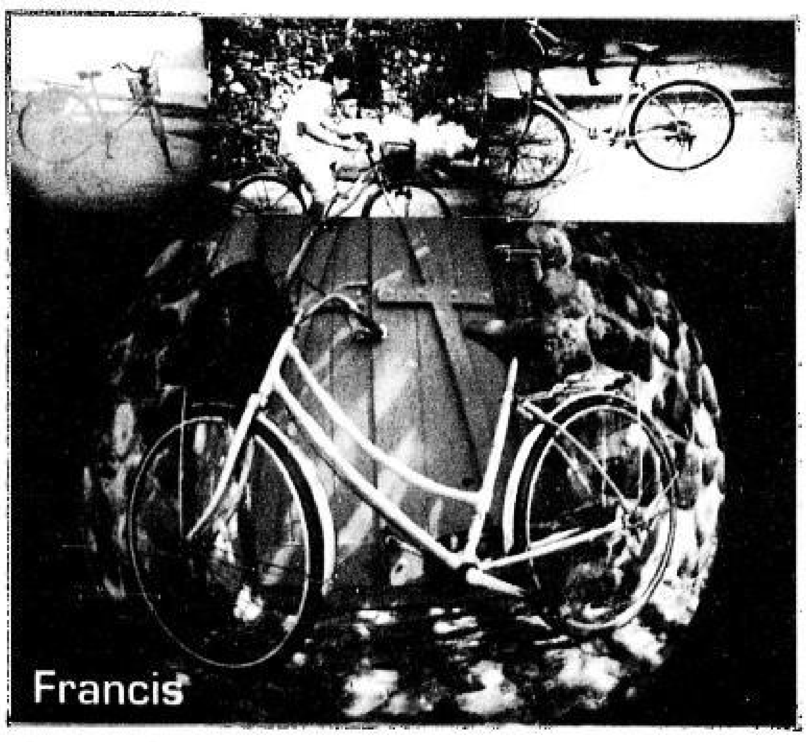
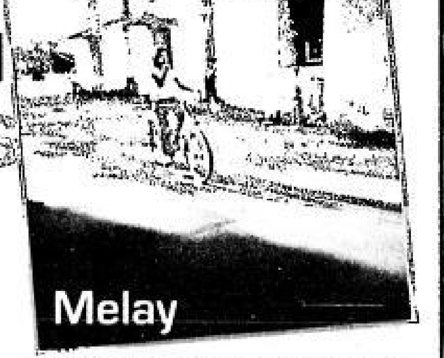


Francis

Two-wheeled wonders

BATANES IS A province of bicycles. Very few people have cars—many locals use bikes as their mode of transport. And so we spotted two-wheeled wonders everywhere. Outside the lighthouse. Outside houses. Crossing streets. Abandoned in street corners.

PP



Melay

Jolo

Zoe

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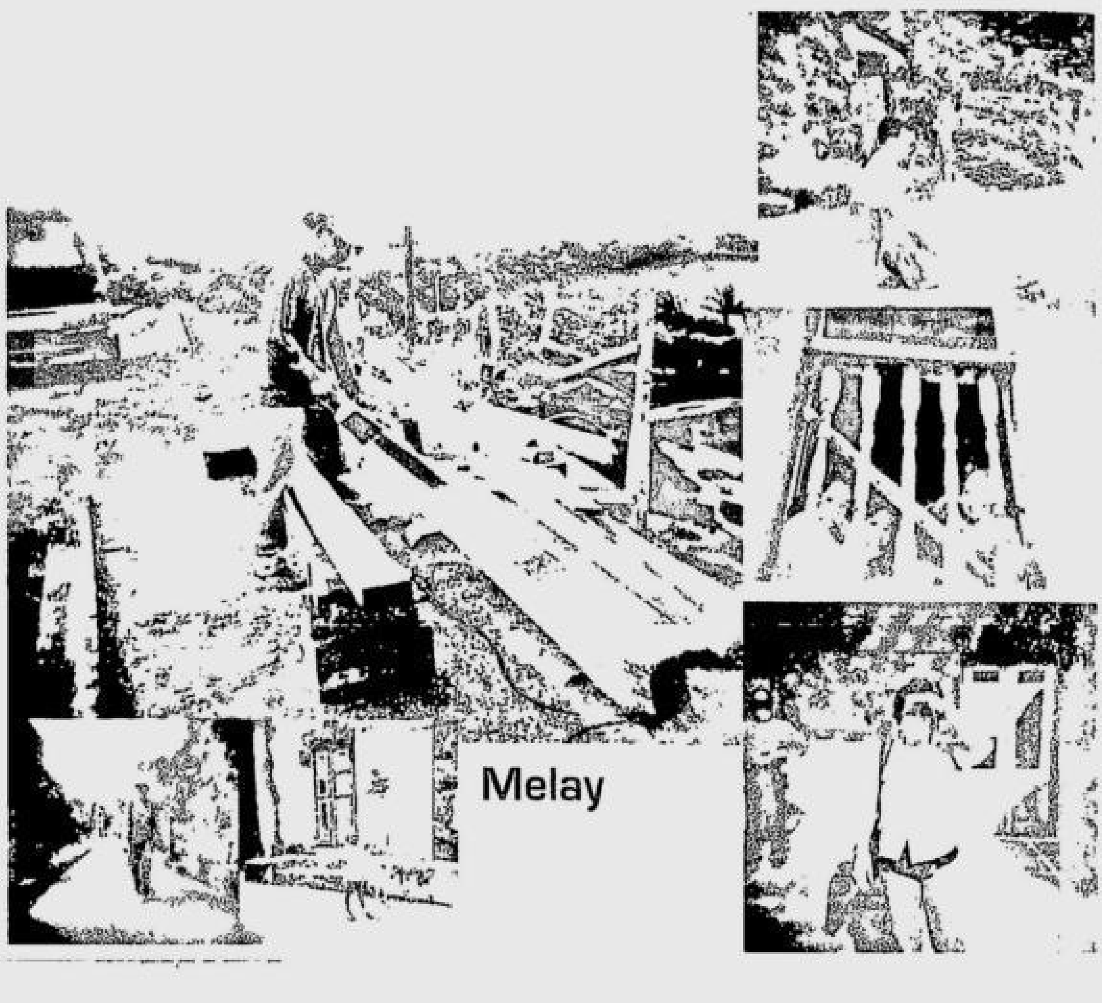
Melay

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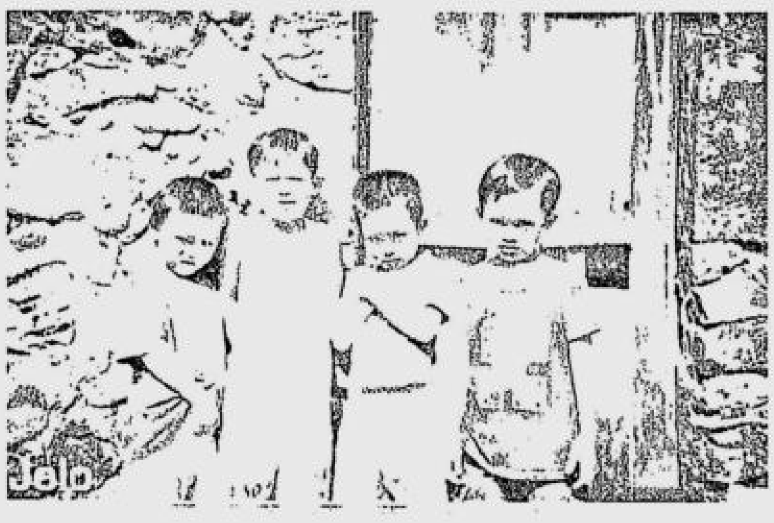
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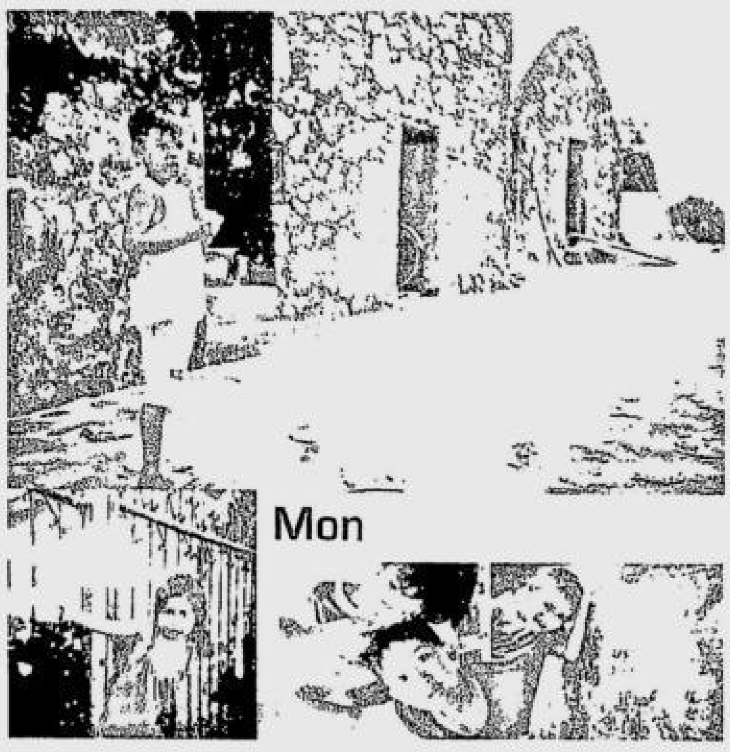
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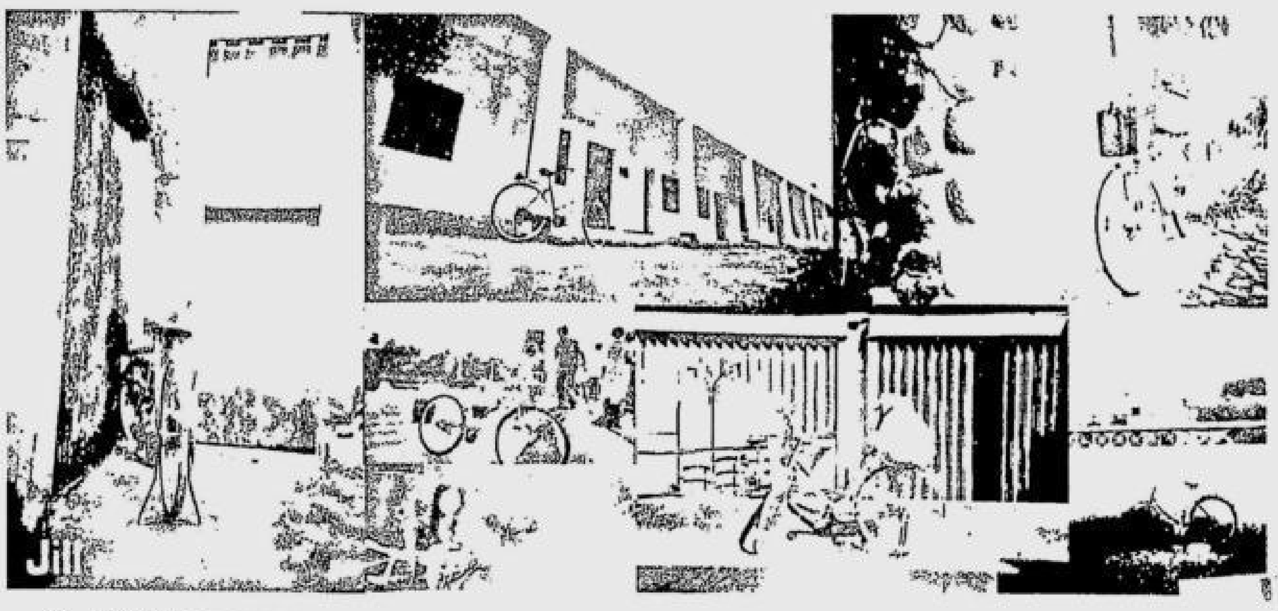
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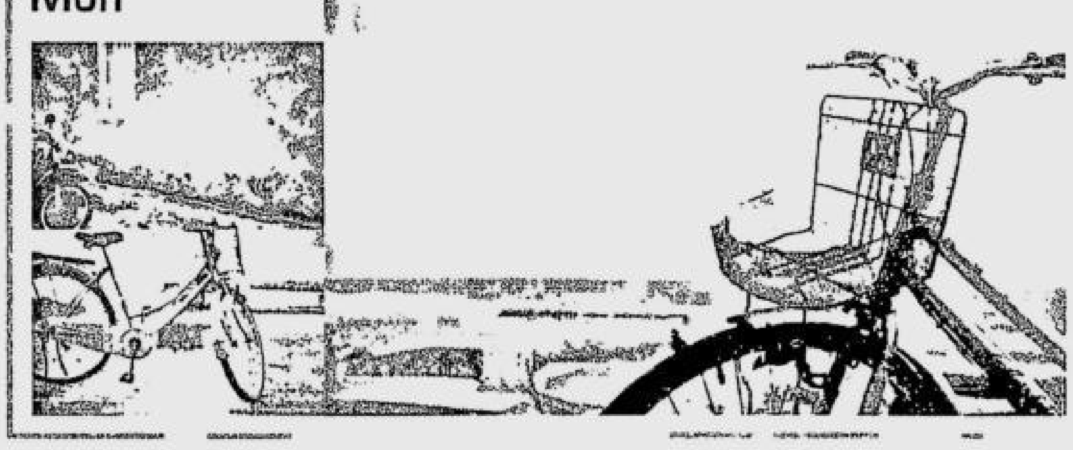

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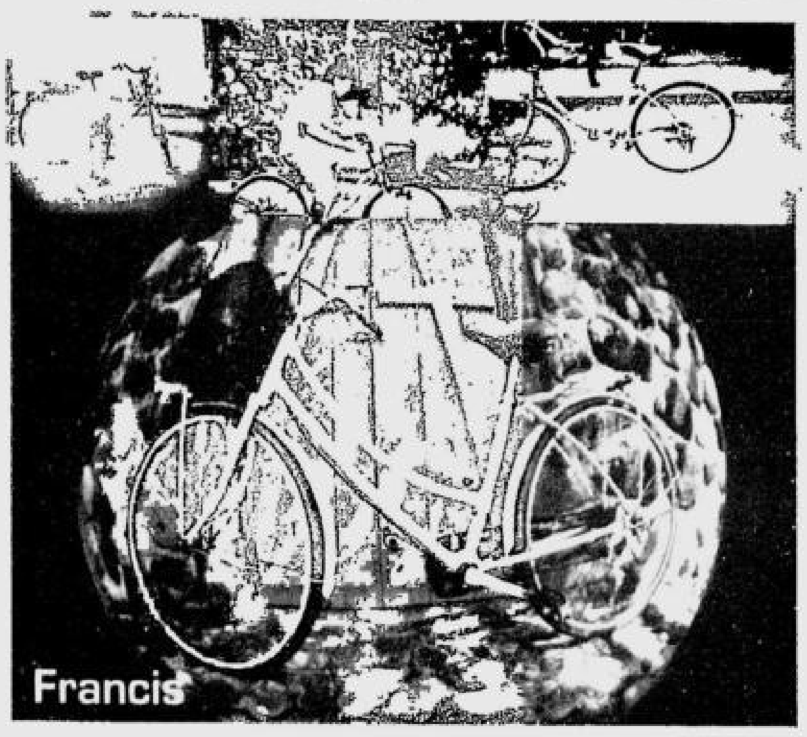

Francis

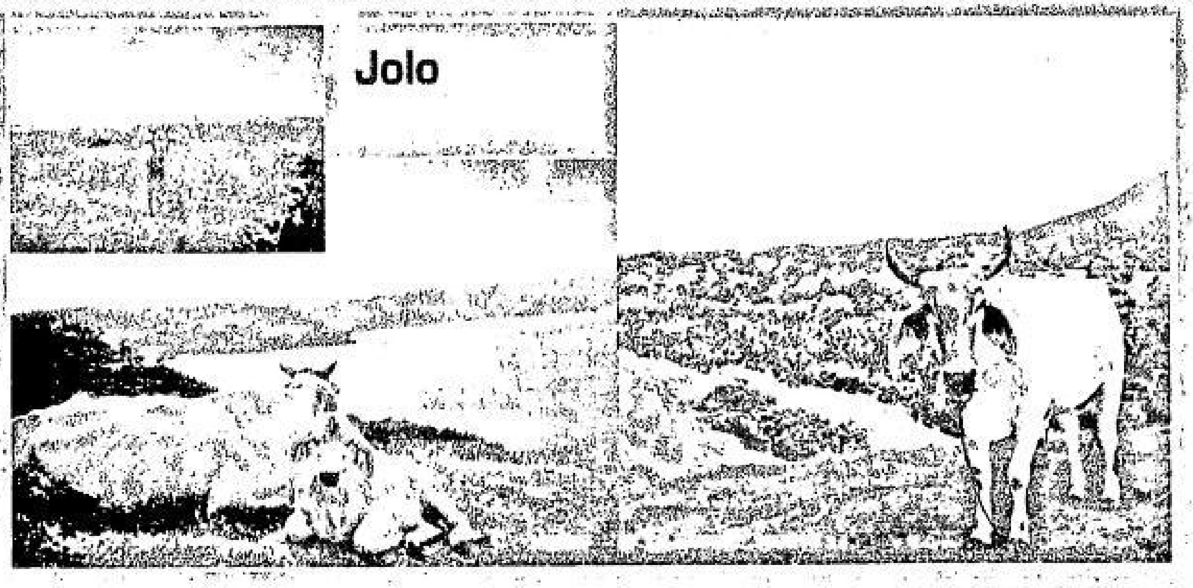
Melay

Jolo

Zoe

Cow-stalking and goat-chasing

COWS, CARABAOS, cats, dogs, chickens, goats. You can find them all over Batanes, peacefully lying on the grass, playing on the hills and crossing roads. They're used to people, although sometimes they would look at us with eyes that seemed to say, "What are you doing here?" We answered by taking pictures—lots of pictures. *PP*



Jolo

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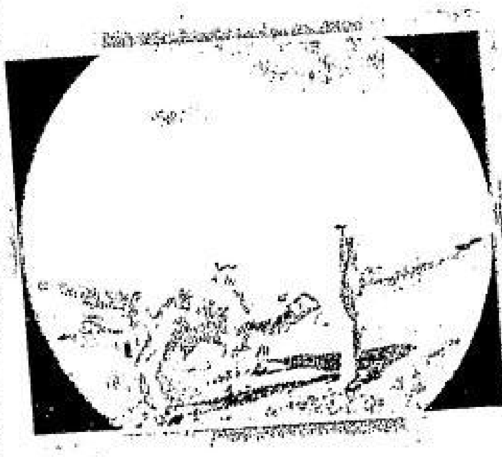

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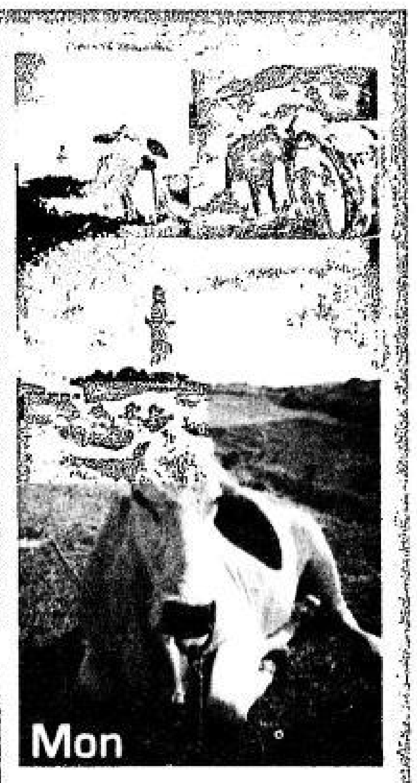

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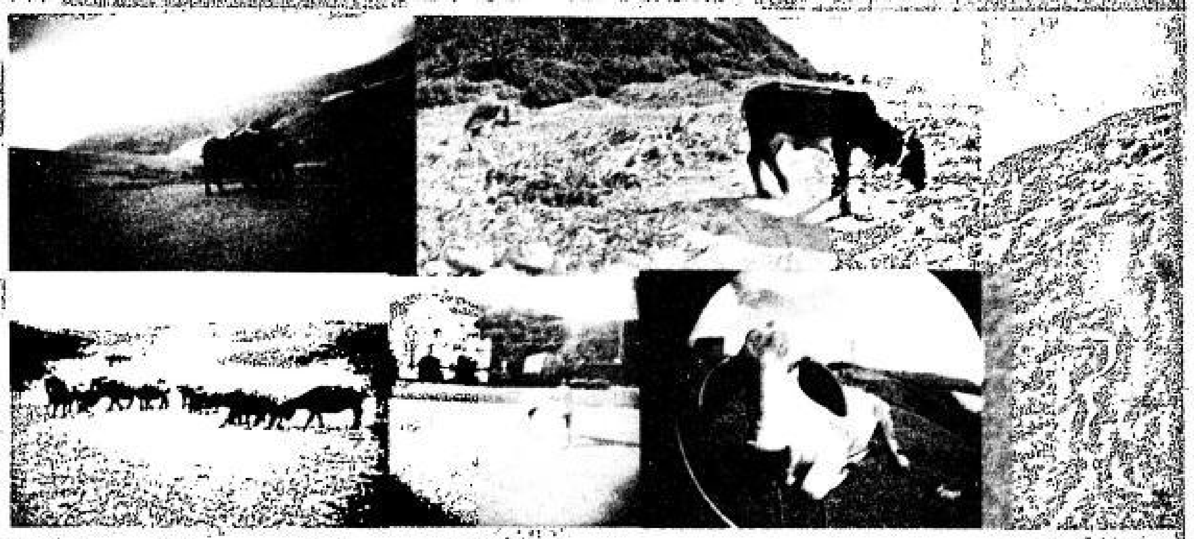

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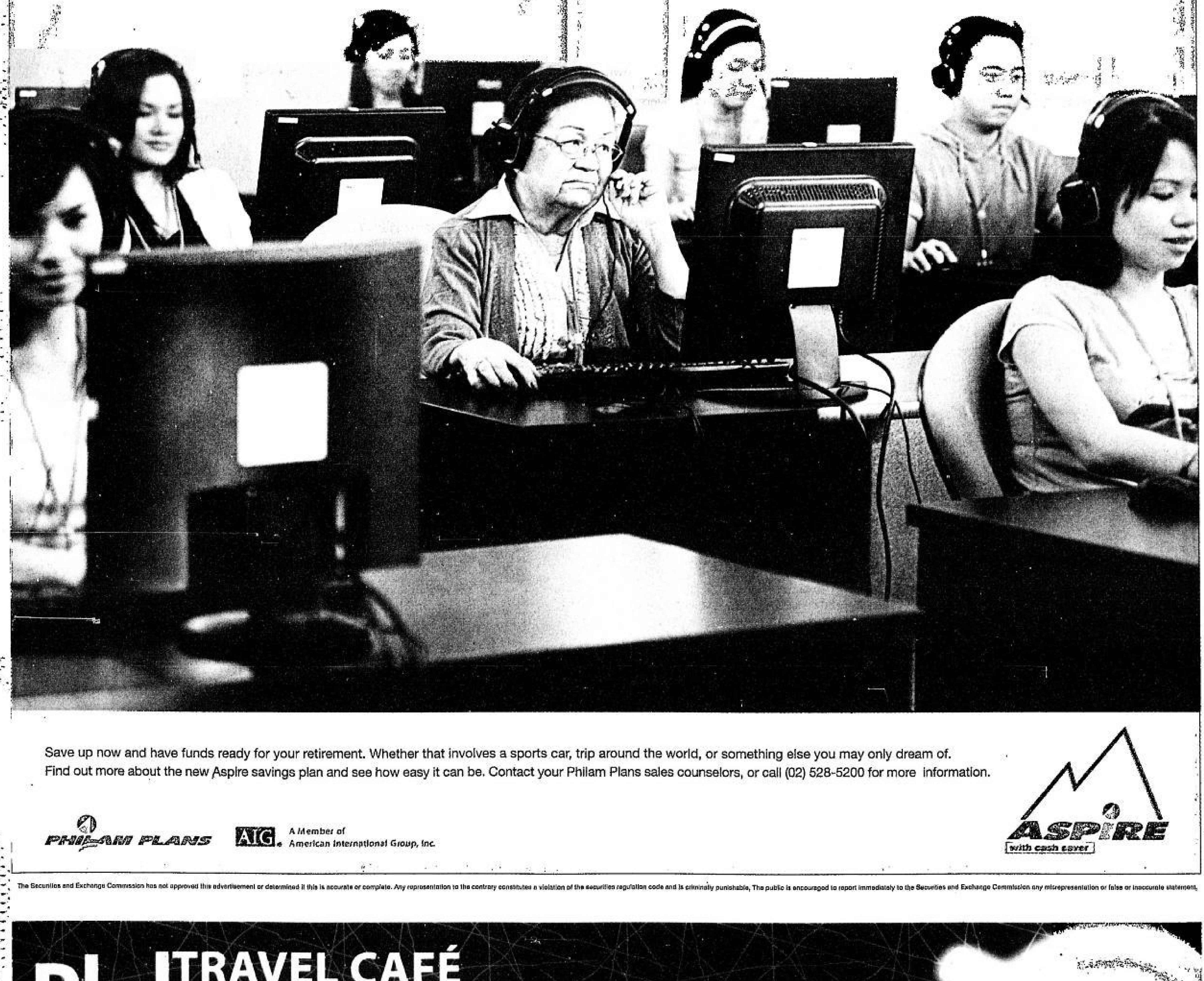

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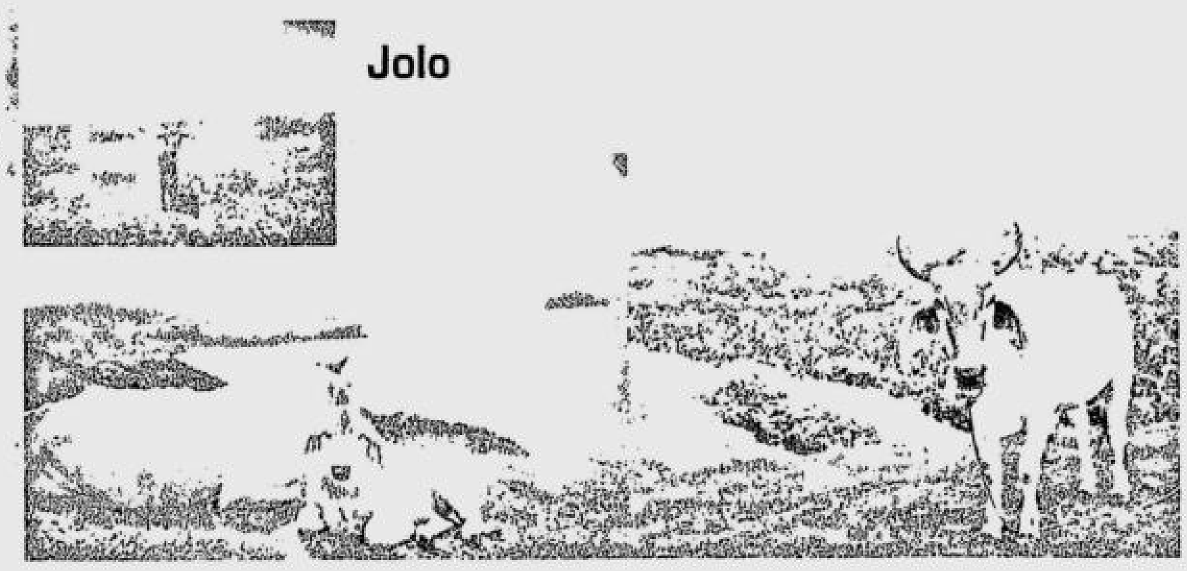

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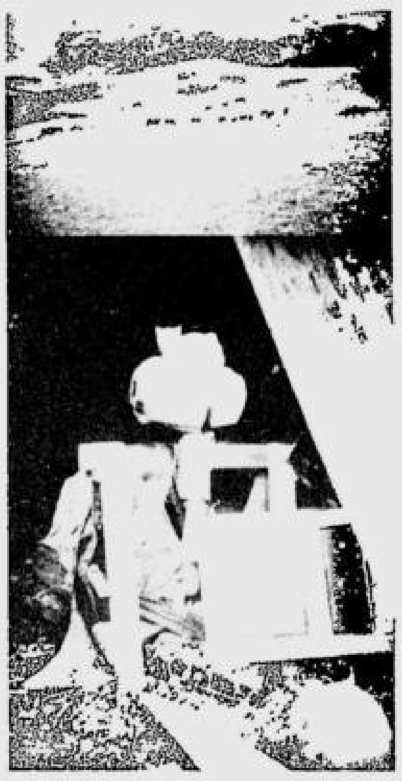

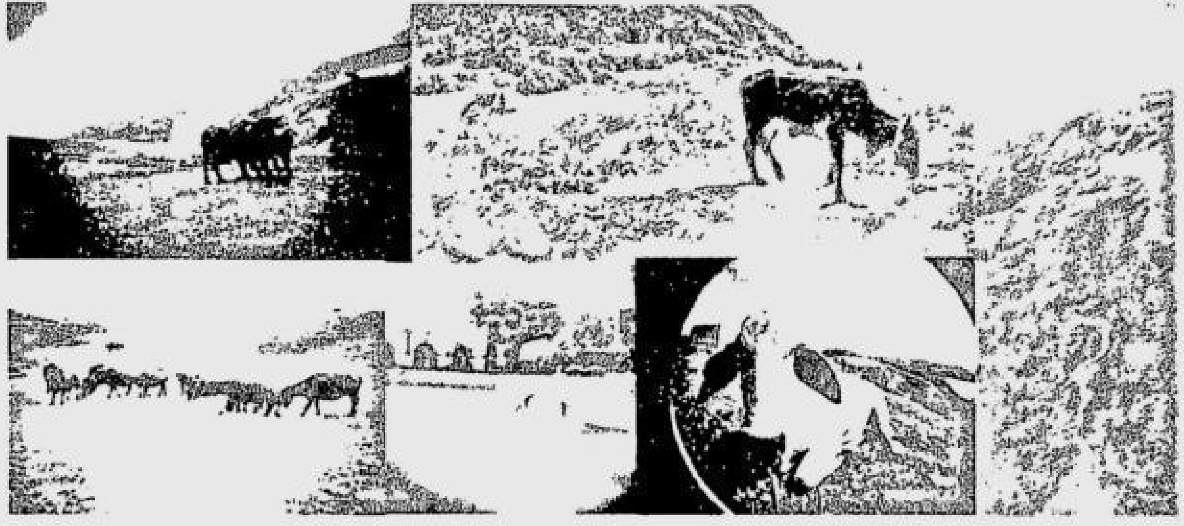

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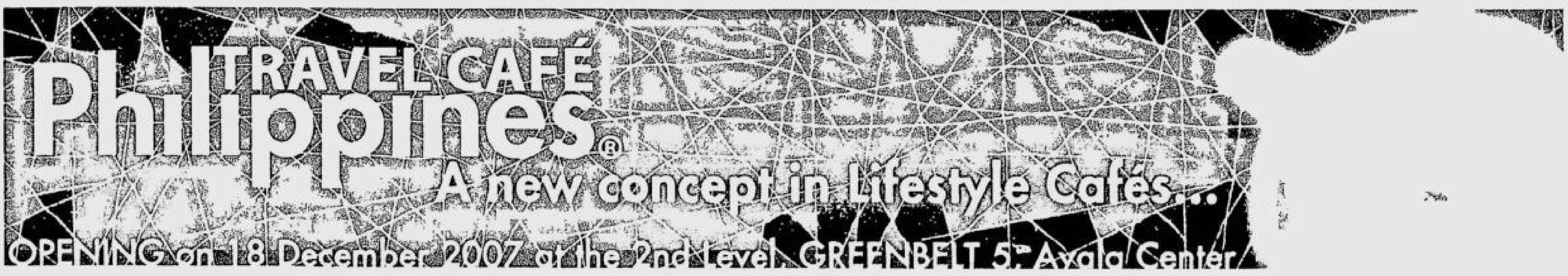

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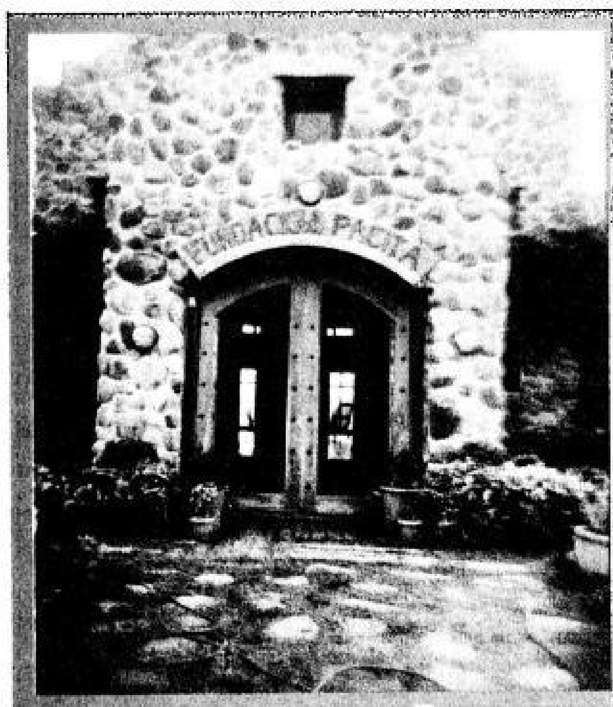
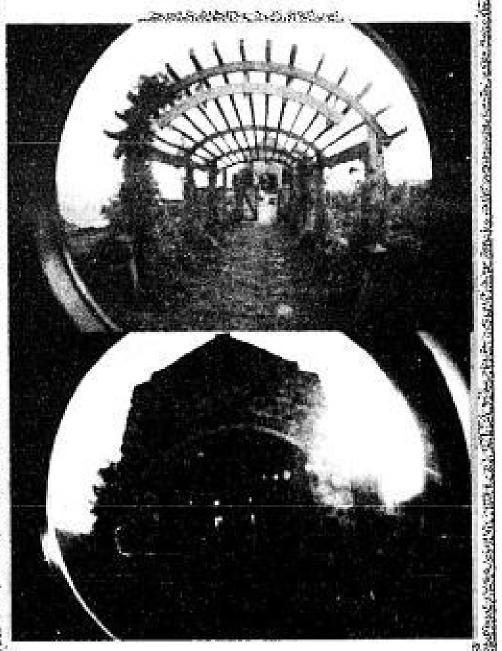
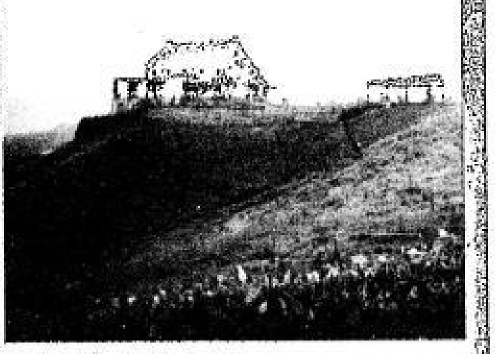


The colorful world of Pacita

Fundacion Abad, the home of the late Pacita Abad, has been turned into a museum that celebrates the artist's creativity and her full life. Pacita belonged to the Abad clan of Batanes. Known for her liberal use of bright hues, Pacita painted the vibrant Alkaff Bridge in Singapore. Her legacy lives on in her beautiful home and in the hearts of those whose worlds she had made more colorful.





Honesty is the best policy

WE WALKED INTO THE HONESTY Coffee Shop, which was dark and a little dusty. A sign on the wall read, "God is my security guard." No one was manning the store. You were expected to get what you needed and leave the payment on the counter.

I did just that, buying biscuits for our guides and drivers.

It was a very strange feeling—and when I say strange, I mean good. *PP*

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JILL LEJANO

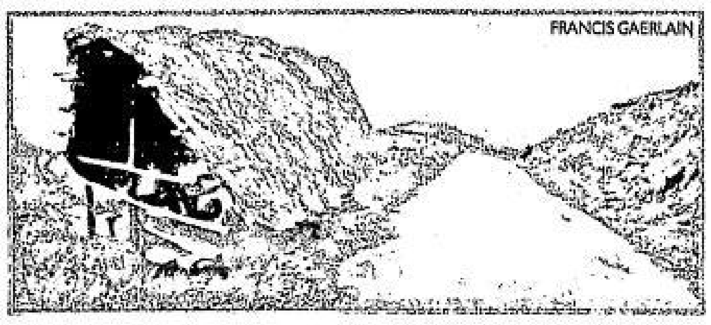
MON GUINTO

FRANCIS GAERLAIN

FRANCIS GAERLAIN

Forget the myths

You hear all kinds of things about the northernmost tip of the Philippines. This week 2bU! separates fact from fiction and sets things straight



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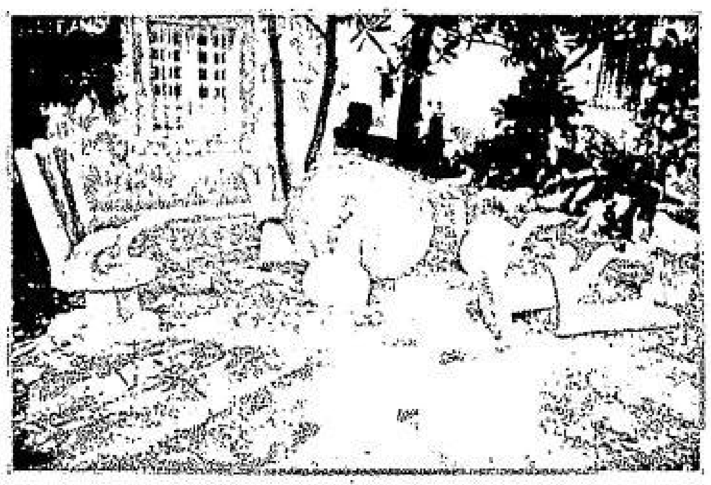
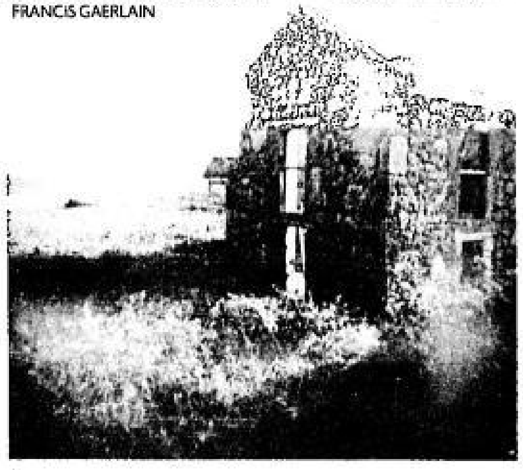


MELANIE VICENTE

MELANIE VICENTE



FRANCIS GAERLAIN

MYTH: YOU can only go to Batanes once a year.

Fact: Tourists can go any time of the year to Batanes. But people who want to enjoy an authentic and unique winter experience in the Philippines should go in January.

Myth: Batanes is typhoon-prone.

Fact: If Batanes is always mentioned in connection with weather disturbances or typhoons, it's because its capital, Basco, holds the last weather station in the north and is therefore used as a reference point for all typhoons that enter the Philippine area of responsibility.

Myth: Electricity is rationed in Batanes.

Fact: The island has continuous 24 hours of electricity that allows for cable TV access and air-conditioning. Which is not really necessary given the pleasant Batanes breeze.

Myth: The chances of you getting stranded in Batanes for as long as a week is very likely.

Fact: Asian Spirit, the only airline that flies to Batanes, offers flights five times a week. The airline has a fleet of planes to take you to and from the Philippine's last frontier.

Myth: Batanes is disconnected from the rest of the Philippines.

Fact: Batanes has Internet access. Tourists can easily check their e-mail, IM friends, even update their Facebook, Friendster or Multiply sites from Internet cafes in the area. The island also has ample cell signal strength for all major mobile phone service providers.

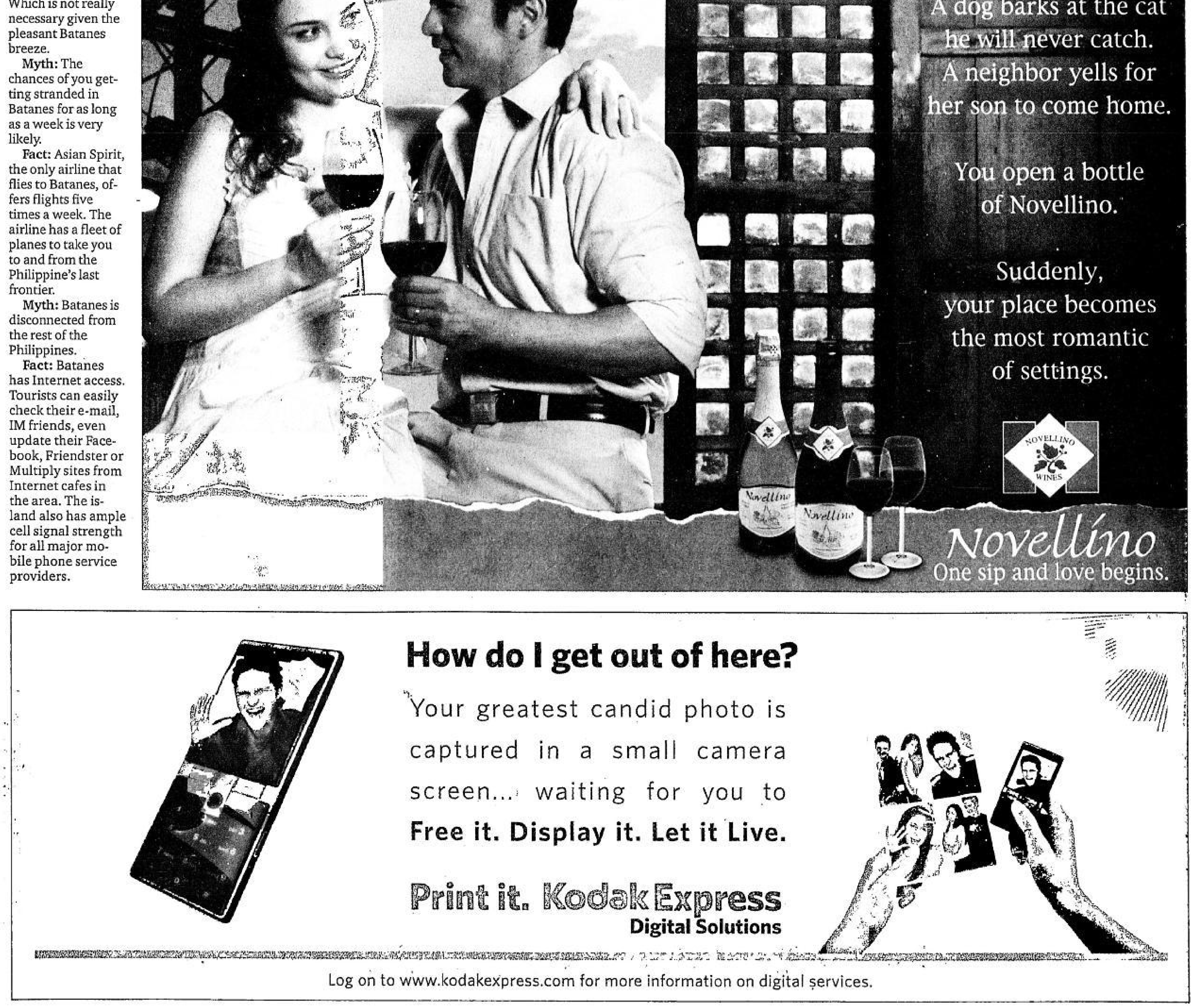
Outside,
the nightly traffic
roars and rumbles.
A dog barks at the cat
he will never catch.
A neighbor yells for
her son to come home.

You open a bottle
of Novellino.

Suddenly,
your place becomes
the most romantic
of settings.

Novellino
One sip and love begins.

NOVELLINO WINES
Novellino
Novellino



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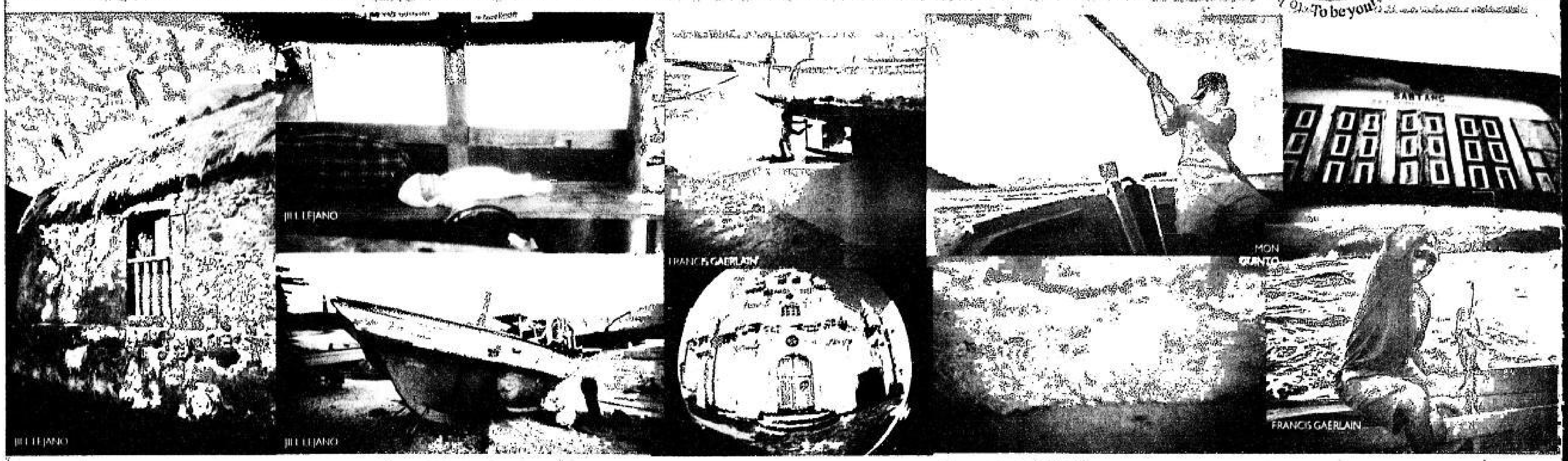
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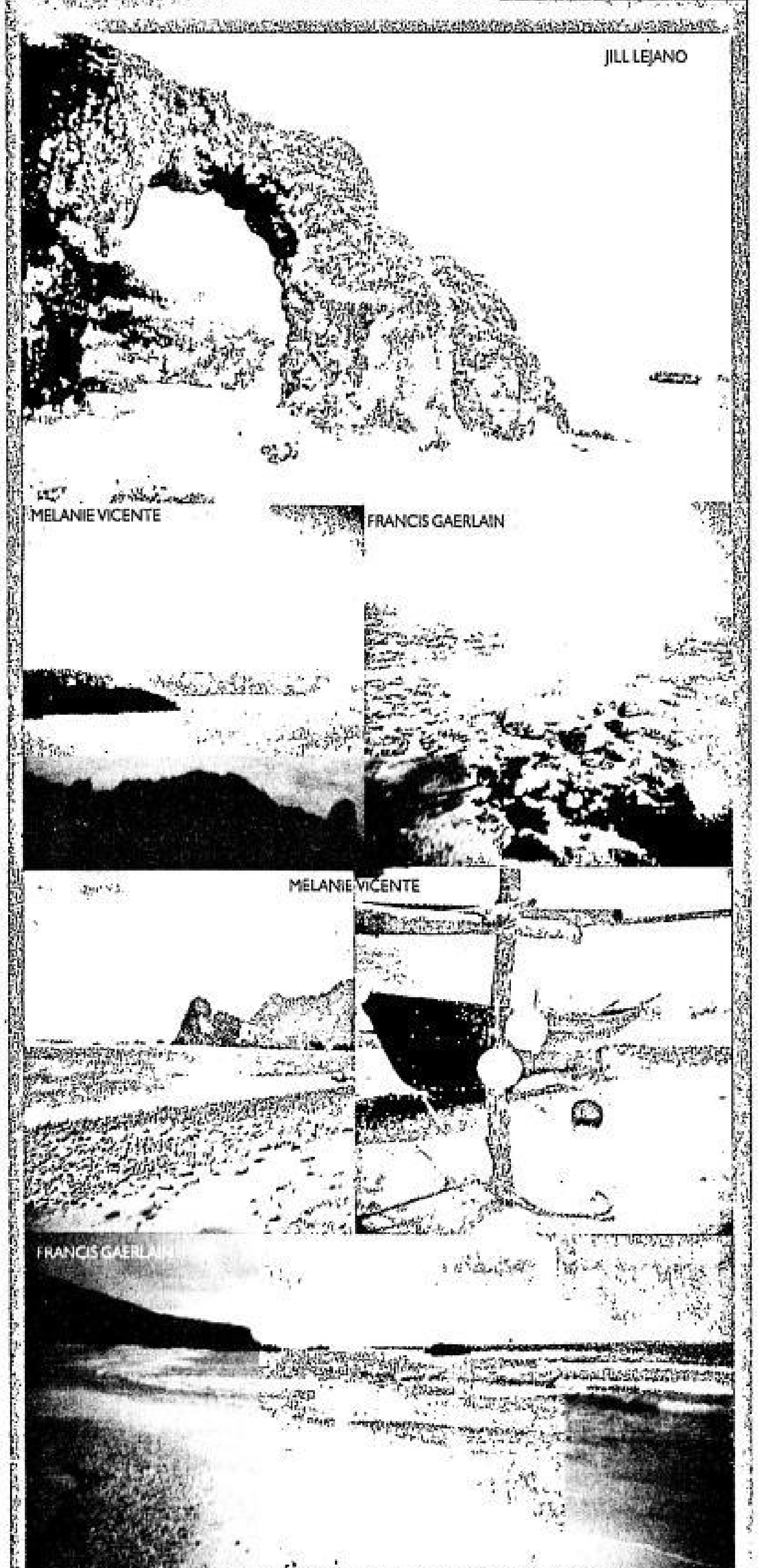
FRANCIS GAERLAIN
ZOE LEZEQUIEL
JOLO SANTOS
JILL LEJANO
JOLO SANTOS
FRANCIS

Fall in love with Batane

Batanes is more than just a backdrop for the Iza Calzado and Ken Zhu movie. Its rolling hills and majestic scenery play the silent third lead in a film bound to be remembered by many. We visited some of the locations where the film was shot and fell in love with Batanes' rustic feel, lush hills, cobalt waters and breathtaking views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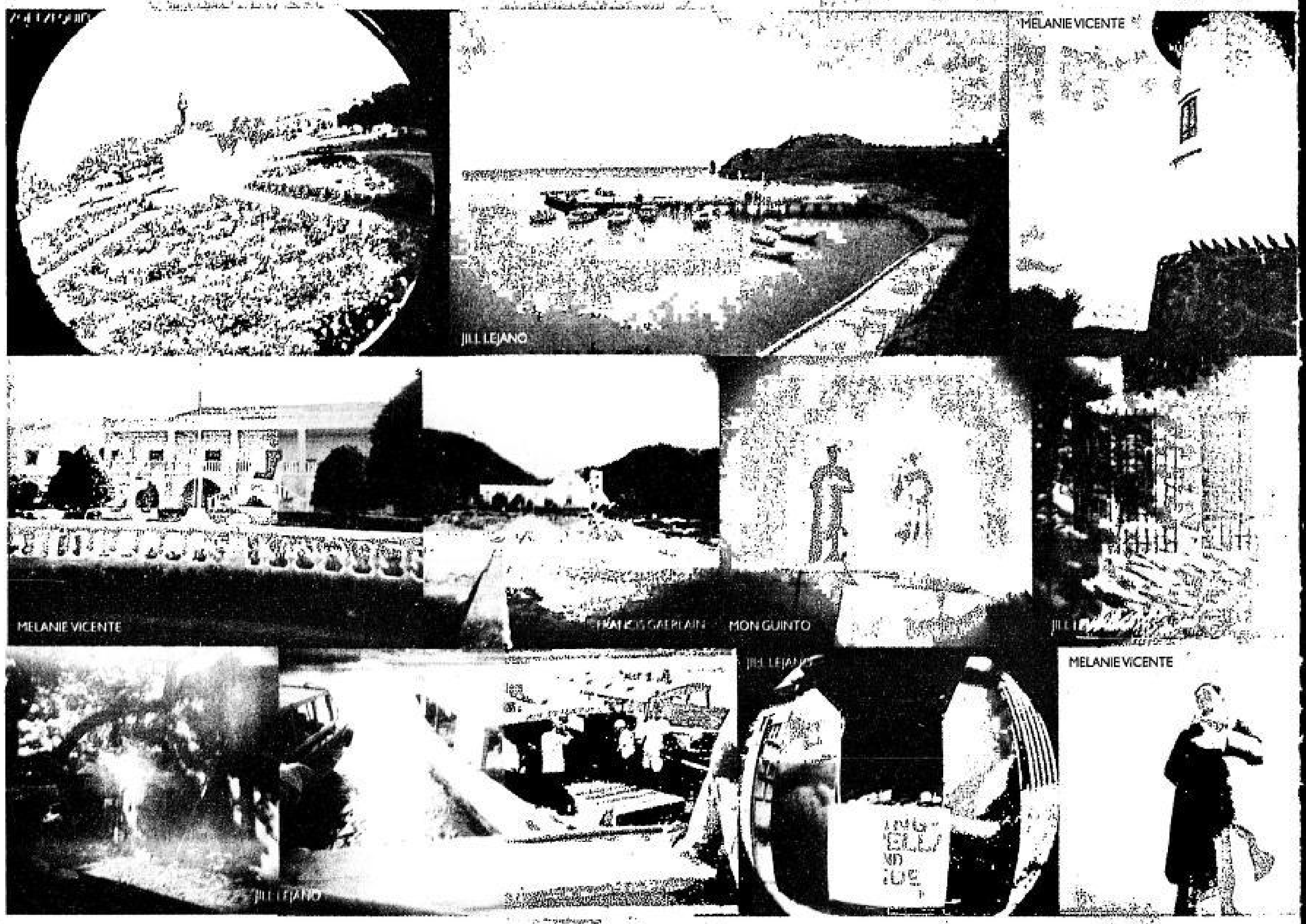
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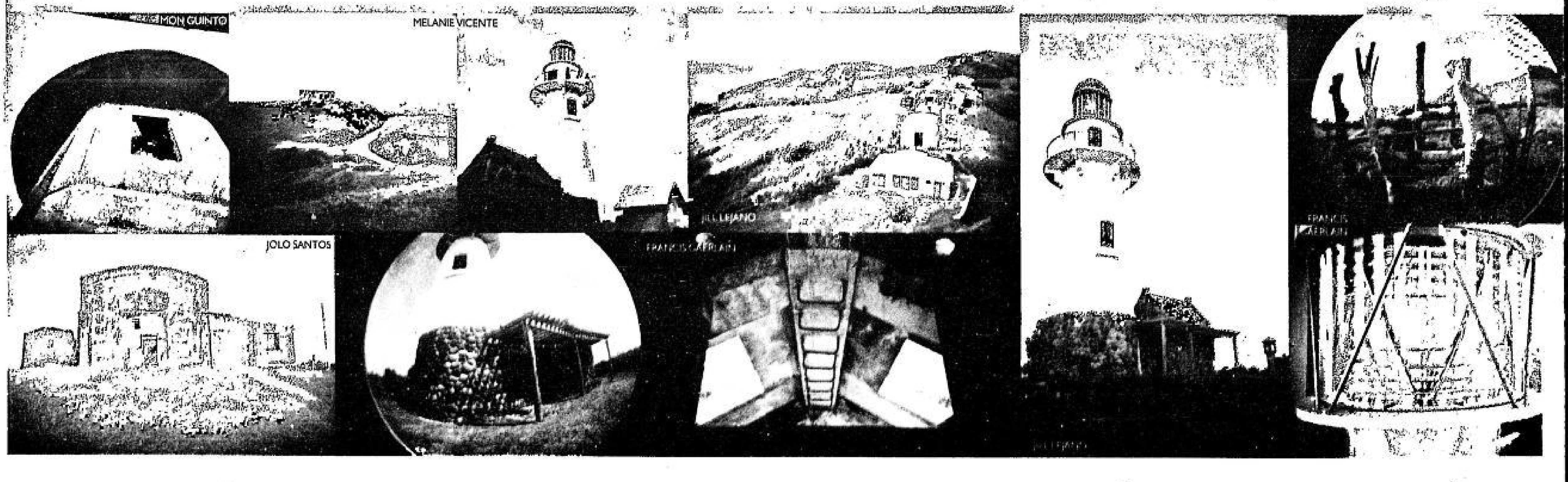
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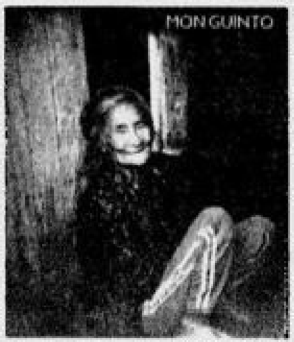

MON GUINTO

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MELANIE VICENTE

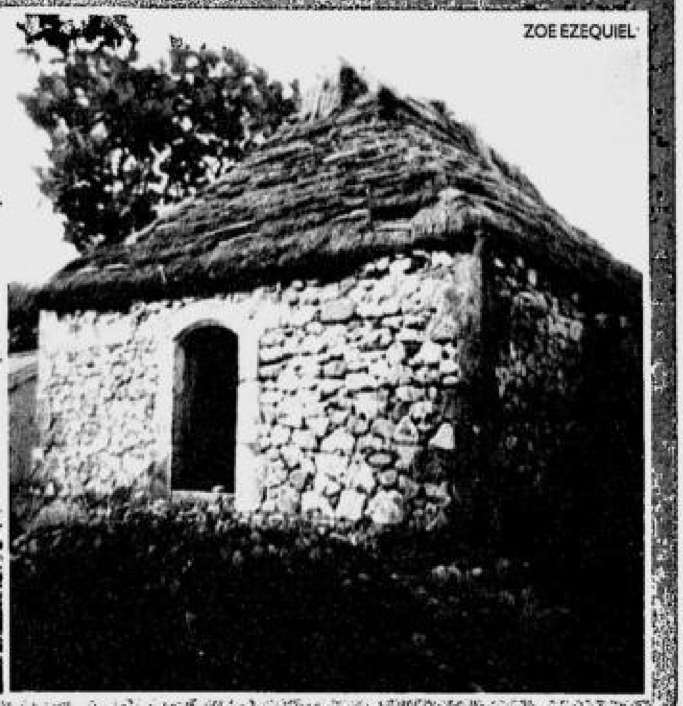
The woman and the oldest house

FLORESTIDA Estrella sits quietly in the doorway of her home in Ivana, said to be the oldest house in Batanes. Built in 1887 by her grandfather Jose Dacay, the House of Dacay has become an important stop for tourists who visit Batanes.

Florestida is used to guests and welcomes strangers into her home, showing them what protects her from the cold Batanes wind: walls made of corals, boulders and lime paste, and a cogon-thatched roof.

Florestida may sit quietly in her home, in a place considered by many as isolated, but she has reached countless people, with her images easily seen on the Internet, on postcards and even on calendars.

FRANCIS GAERLAIN



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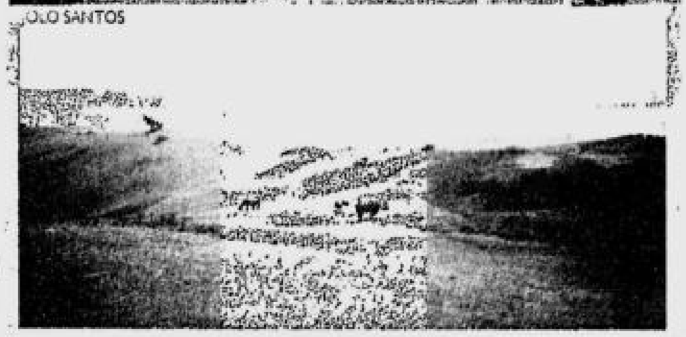

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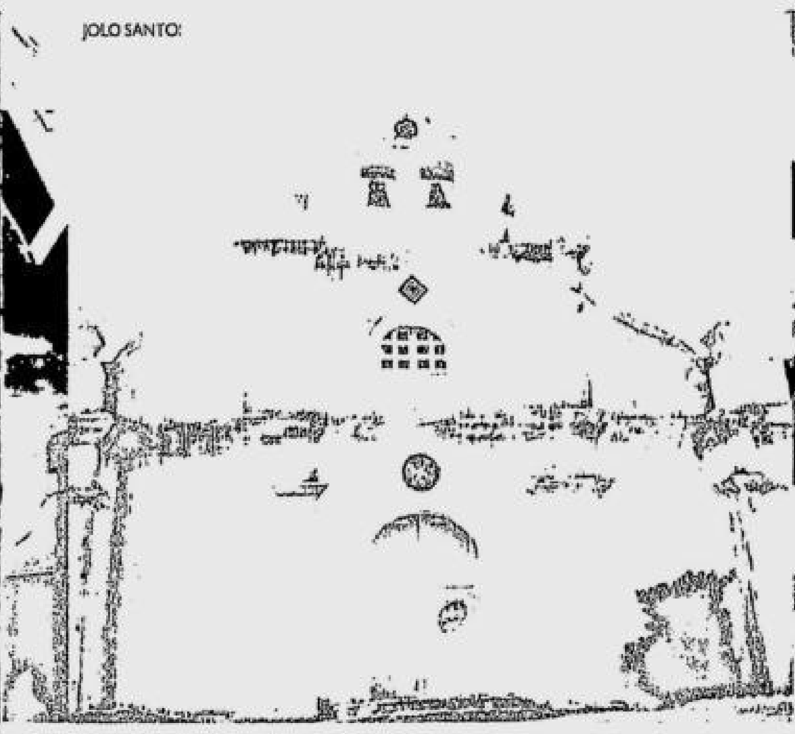

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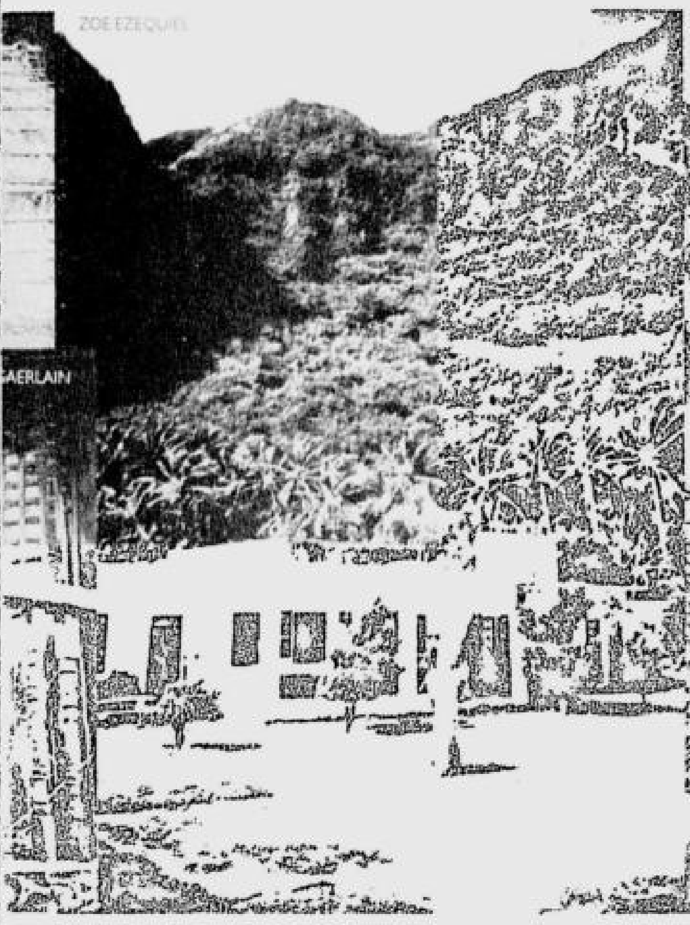

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MON GUINTO

JOLO SANTOS

MELANIE VICENTE

The woman and the oldest house

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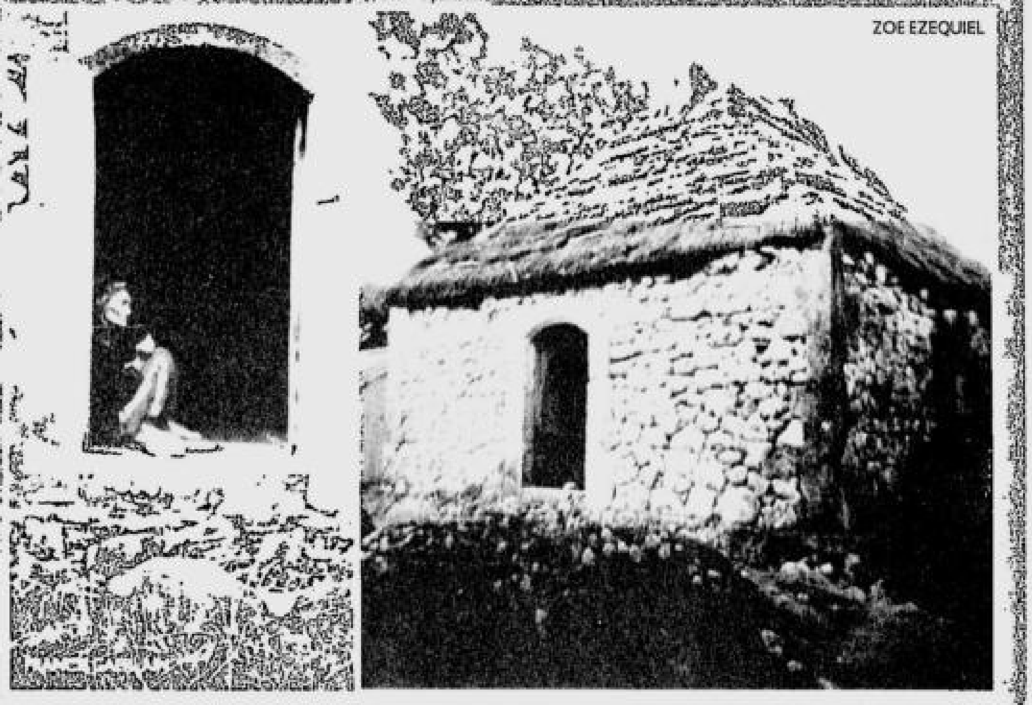

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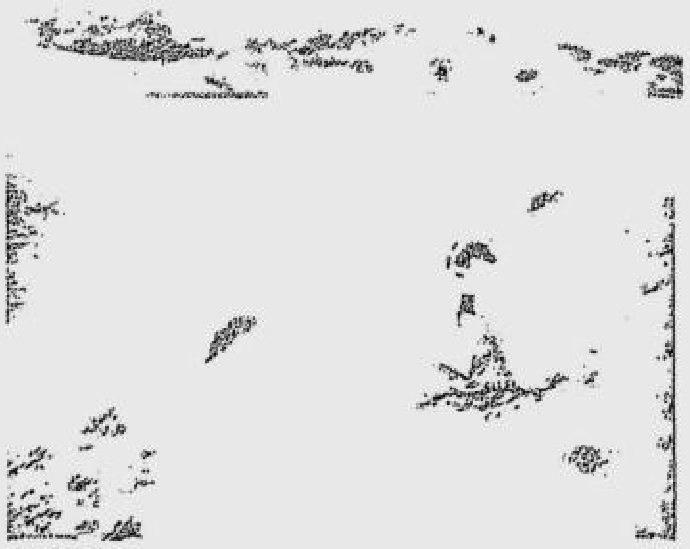

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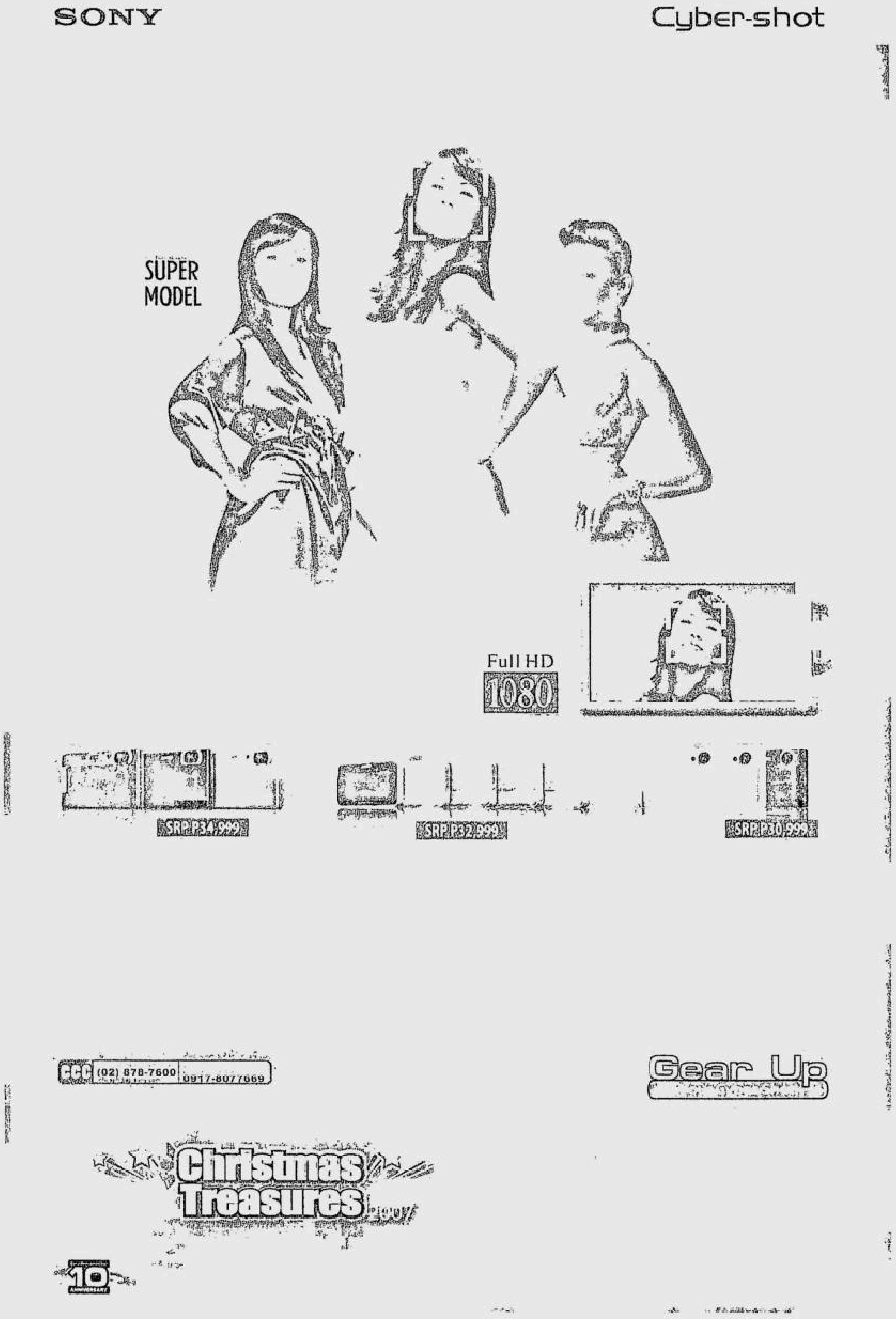
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Jill Lejano

Francis Gaerlain

Have your own Batanes adventure

Melanie Vicente

YOU DON'T NEED TO GO FAR TO HAVE a different experience during the coming holidays. If you want to see a different side of the Philippines, hop aboard an Asian Spirit flight to Batanes.

Asian Spirit, the airline that flies to the remote tourist destinations in the country, offers packages to Batanes, in its desire to encourage people to explore this part of the Philippines.

"There's no other place in the Philippines as beautiful as Batanes," says Asian Spirit executive vice president Joaquin Po. And Asian Spirit wants to bring serene places such as Batanes closer to people by offering one-hour jet flights with the BAe146 to the island.

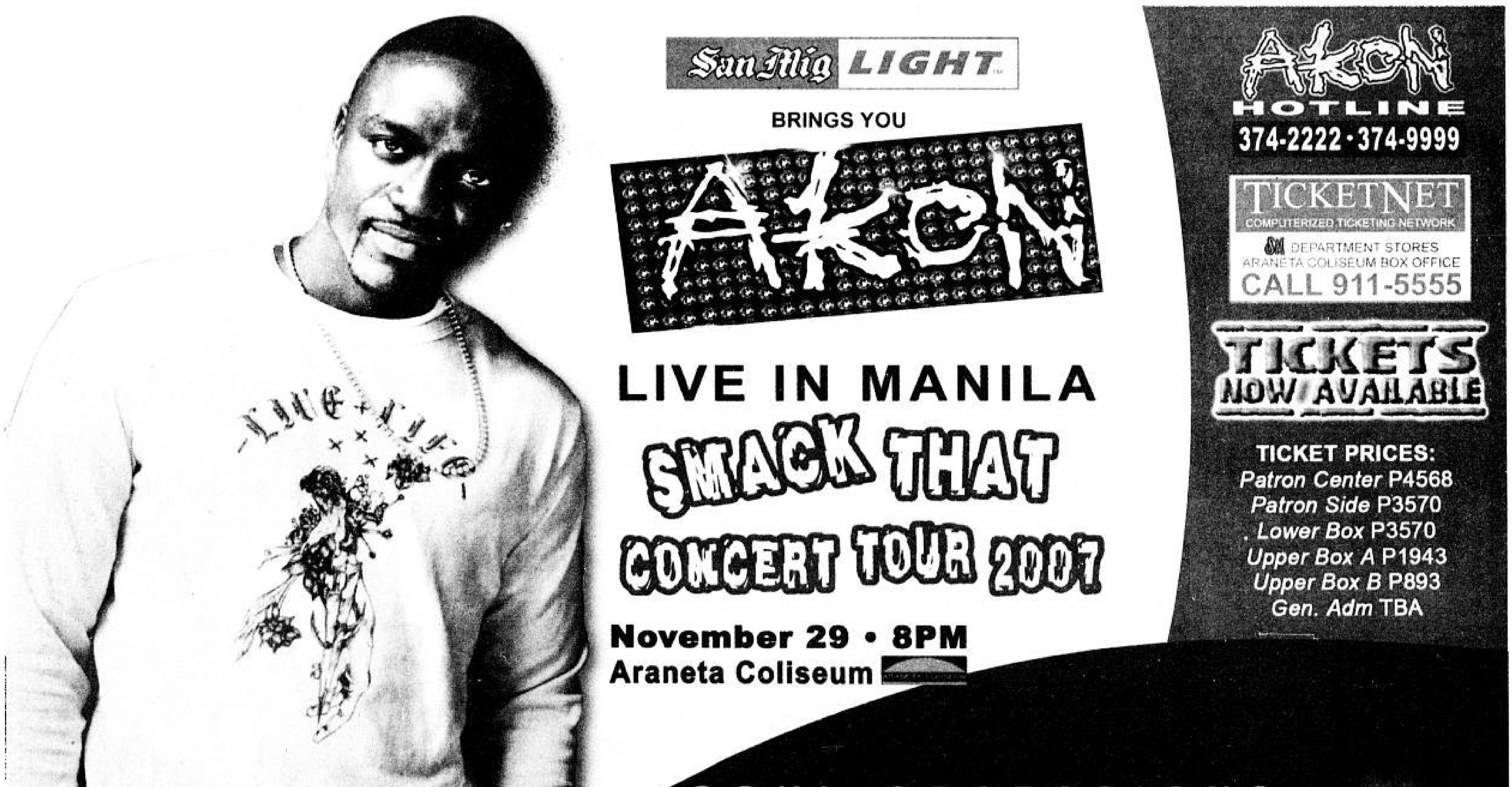
Vacationers who want to enjoy a view of the sea can stay at the Batanes Seaside lodge. Three days and two nights spent in the regular rooms cost P15,893; four days and three nights will set you back P17,187. Air-conditioned rooms are also available for P17,069 for a three night-two day stay and P17,657 for four nights and three days.

Guests who don't mind an uphill yet rewarding climb can check in at Pension Ivatan. For three days and two nights, twin-sharing rooms cost P16,481 while triple-sharing is at P16,128. If you want to stay for four days and three nights, twin sharing rooms are at P17,657 while triple-sharing ones are at P17,304. The packages include round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations, three full meals, an island tour of both Sabtang and Batan, transportation, airport transfers and souvenirs to remind you of your trip. For more information, contact 8553333.

Mon Guinto

Win a trip to Batanes!

Asian Spirit and 2bU! want to give you a Batanes adventure that you can share with a friend. Just tell us, in 500 words or less why you think you deserve to take this memorable trip. E-mail your entries, along with your name, age, school/office and contact info to fallinlovewithbatanes@gmail.com. Deadline of entries is Dec. 10.



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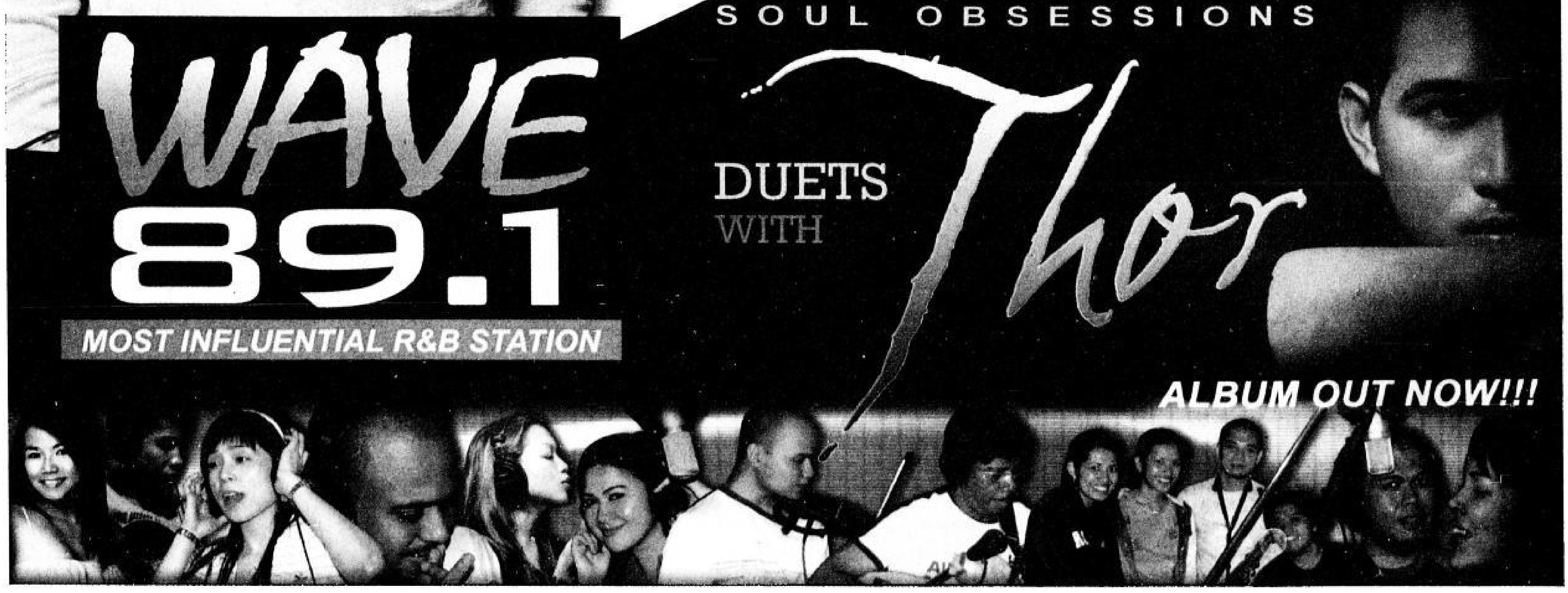

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The chameleonic actor talks about working with Brad Pitt in the new film "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford"

"I'D like to play Hamlet, something like that."

Sam Rockwell:
Rockin' beta male

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

SAM ROCKWELL IS A chameleon. Give him a role, and he blends in with the scenery, quickly makes his mark, and steals scenes even when he's just in the periphery.

Look at his filmography, and you'll be reminded of memorable turns in movies like "The Green Mile," "Matchstick Men," even the space comedy "Galaxy Quest."

In the last 10 years, he's also gotten critical raves for his theater and indie work. The roles that he's played and the types of films he's appeared in vary radically. He's donned a long list of personalities, from the dichotomized to the downright dorky.

Rockwell's still chockfull of surprises. Just recently, he played the distraught dad of a diabolical kid in the psychological thriller "Joshua," and a simple-minded henchman in "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford." Those characters are nothing alike, obviously, but the versatile actor breathes distinct life to both.

Rockwell revealed in an exclusive phone interview with 2bU! that helping make "Assassination" was inspiring, thanks to a generous working atmosphere. As Charley Ford, he alternately protects and ridicules his kid brother Robert (Casey Affleck), who worships the elusive bandit—their boss—Jesse James (Brad Pitt).

SAM Rockwell on Brad Pitt and Casey Affleck: "They're very sexy people. I can't get my hands off of them!"

Was Charley Ford easy to interpret? How did you prepare for the role?

You know, it was okay. I had a good time. It was intense, but I really had a good time. I did a lot of horseback riding and I read the book (by Ron Hansen). Casey filled me in with other details, and I slowly pieced it all together. It was really wild. I mean, it's an amazing kind of thing to do. I had a great time doing it; it's cool to do someone who was a part of history.

Did you identify with him at all?

He's a beta, as opposed to an alpha male. He's got a lot of vulnerabilities. I did identify. He was scared... We were scared! There's definitely a connection.

Please describe Andrew Dominik's directing style.

He was great. He's crazy! He did "Chopper." He's just eccentric.

How much did you enjoy acting with Brad Pitt and Casey Affleck?

They're very sexy people. I can't get my hands off of them! They're very handsome. I'm kidding (laughs). They're very dedicated; they work very hard. They were awesome! We hope that people will be emotionally moved and entertained by the movie.

You've done disparate characters, but what roles haven't you played?

I'm done with the cowards. I'd like to play Hamlet, something like that. Or Jesse James!

How unusual was it to work with your parents when you were a kid?

It was wild. It's intense, man! It's fun to act with your parents... and you get to smoke, hang out with the dolls and drink beer!

You did guest appearances in "The Equalizer" and other shows. How is TV different?

Television is very fast; it moves very quickly, yeah. I think doing movies is more fulfilling. I grew up watching a lot of movies.

Which actors did you admire growing up?

Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight... I'd also say John Malkovich, and a lot of people.

Do you feel starstruck when you meet or work with your heroes?

It's fun. I've worked with my hero Gene Hackman. There's Tom Hanks, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Drew Barrymore. There's Nicolas Cage. I've been lucky!

Aside from working with them, what keeps you inspired?

You know, you just try to pick very diverse roles. I really like dramatic roles.

Like some actors, do you see yourself shifting to directing, even temporarily?

Maybe I might. But I don't know. I like acting a lot!

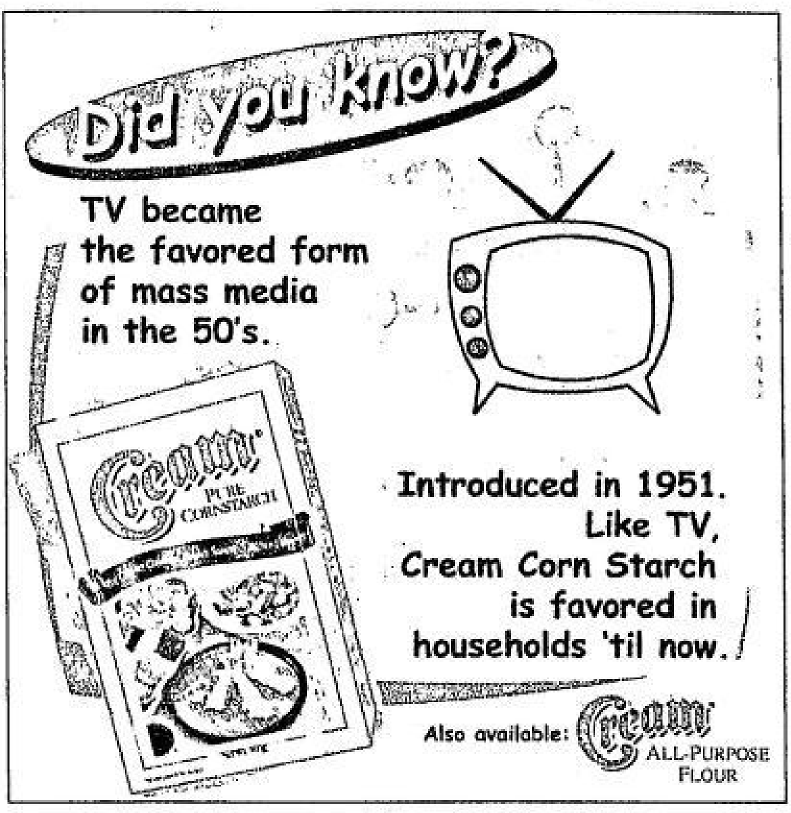
What do aspiring actors need to know about improving their craft?

Go study acting with a good teacher. Do plays. Do theater!

How do you know, exactly, if you've done a role—or even a scene—justice?

I think I know it when I see it. I'm pretty objective about it. You really see it when you're watching it.

THE Men of "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford."



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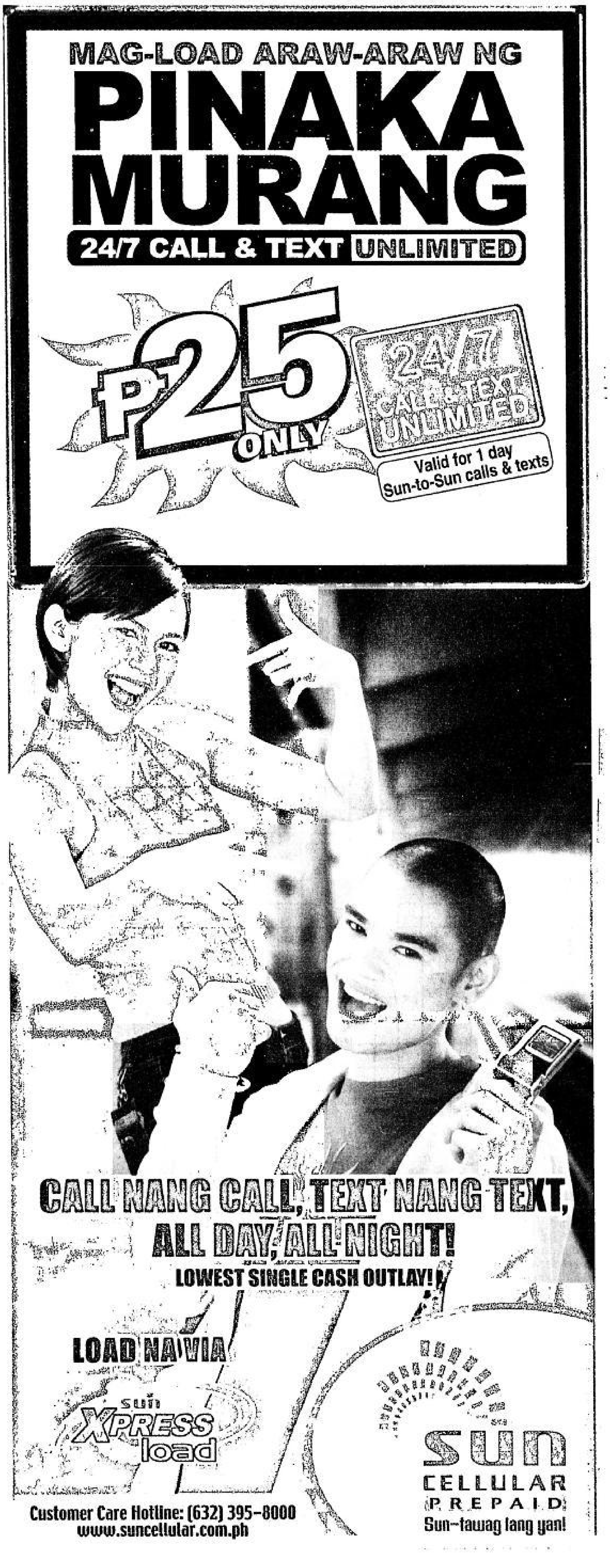

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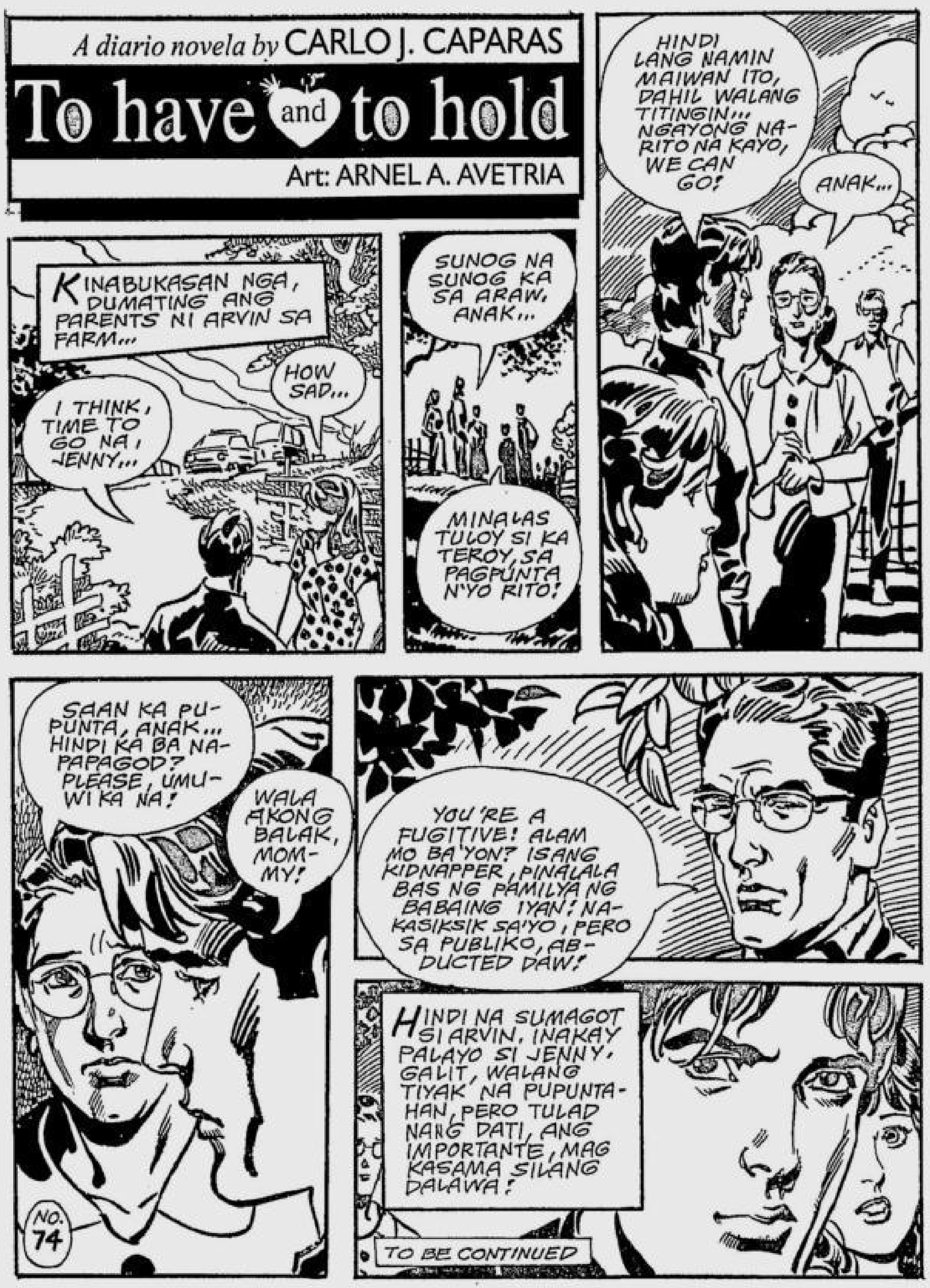
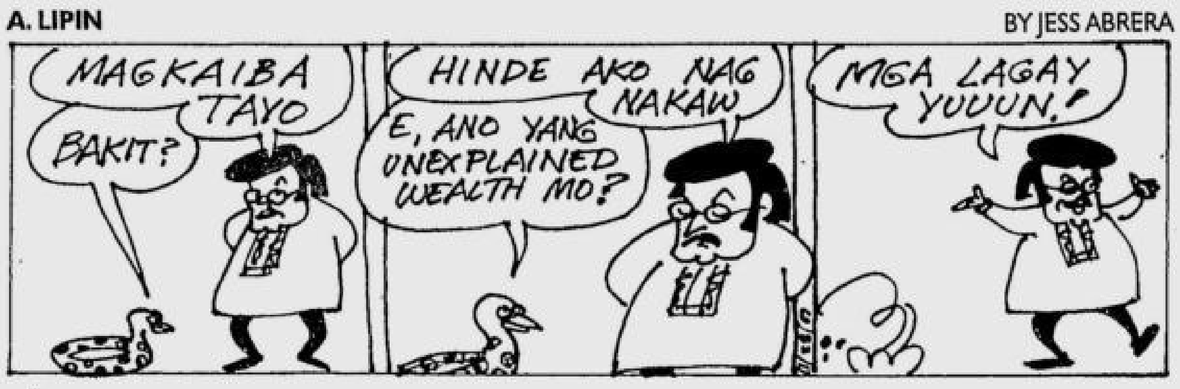
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


KINABUKASAN NGA, DUMATING ANG PARENTS NI ARVIN SA FARM...
HOW SAD...
I THINK, TIME TO GO NA, JENNY...
SUNOG NA SUNOG KA SA ARAW, ANAK...
MINALAS TULOY SI KA TEROY, SA PAGPUNTA N'YO RITO!
HINDI LANG NAMIN MAIWAN ITO, DAHIL WALANG TITINGIN... NGAYONG NARITO NA KAYO, WE CAN GO!
ANAK...
SAAN KA PUPUNTA, ANAK... HINDI KA BA NAPAPAGOD? PLEASE, UMUWI KA NA!
WALA AKONG BALAK, MOMMY!
NO. 74
YOU'RE A FUGITIVE! ALAM MO BA 'YON? ISANG KIDNAPPER, PINALALA BAS NG PAMILYA NG BABAING IYAN! NAKASIKSIK SA'YO, PERO SA PUBLIKO, ABDUCTED DAW!
HINDI NA SUMAGOT SI ARVIN, INAKAY PALAYO SI JENNY, GALIT, WALANG TIYAK NA PUPUNTAHAN, PERO TULAD NANG DATI, ANG IMPORTANTE, MAG KASAMA SILANG DALAWA!
TO BE CONTINUED

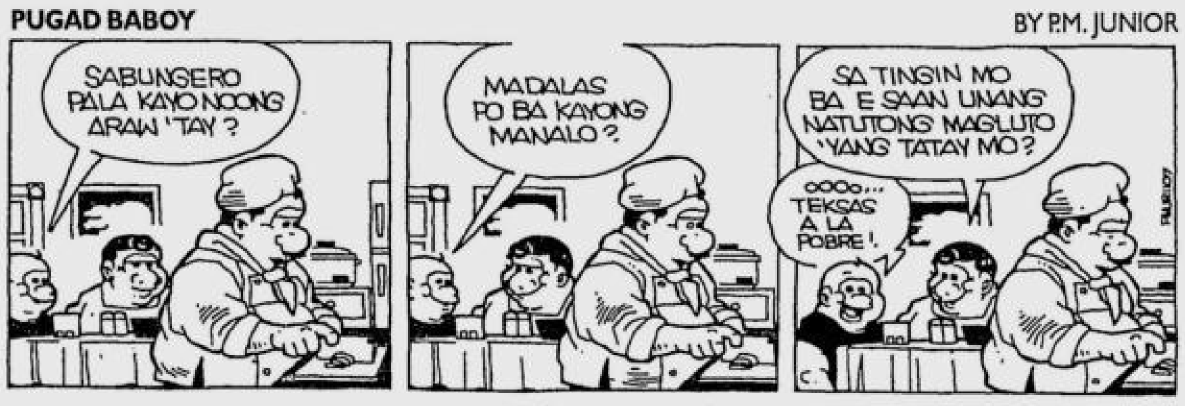
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAGKAIBA TAYO
BAKIT?
HINDE AKO NAG NAKAW
E, ANO YANG UNEXPLAINED WEALTH MO?
MGA LAGAY YUUUN!

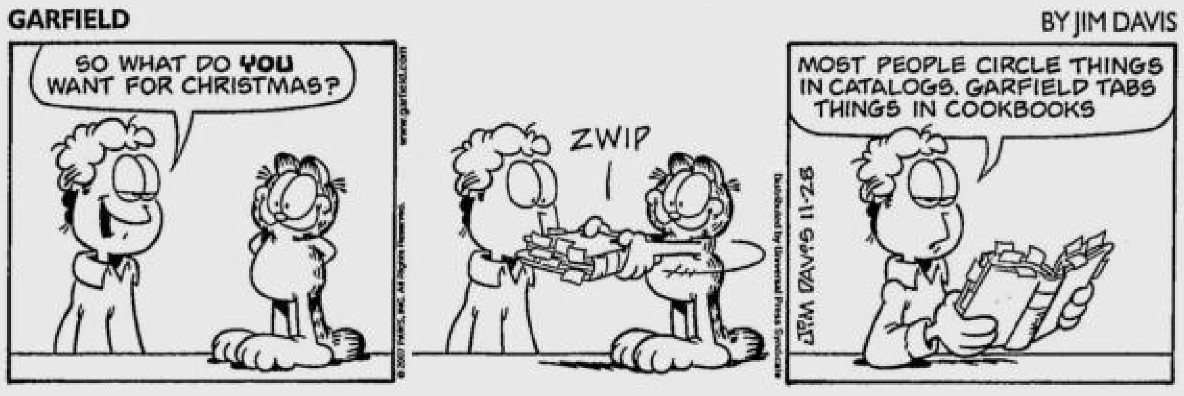
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SABUNGERO PALA KAYO NOONG ARAW 'TAY?
MADALAS PO BA KAYONG MANALO?
SA TINGIN MO BA E SAAN UNANG NATUTONG MAGLUTO 'YANG TATAY MO?
OOOo... TEKSAS A LA POBRE!

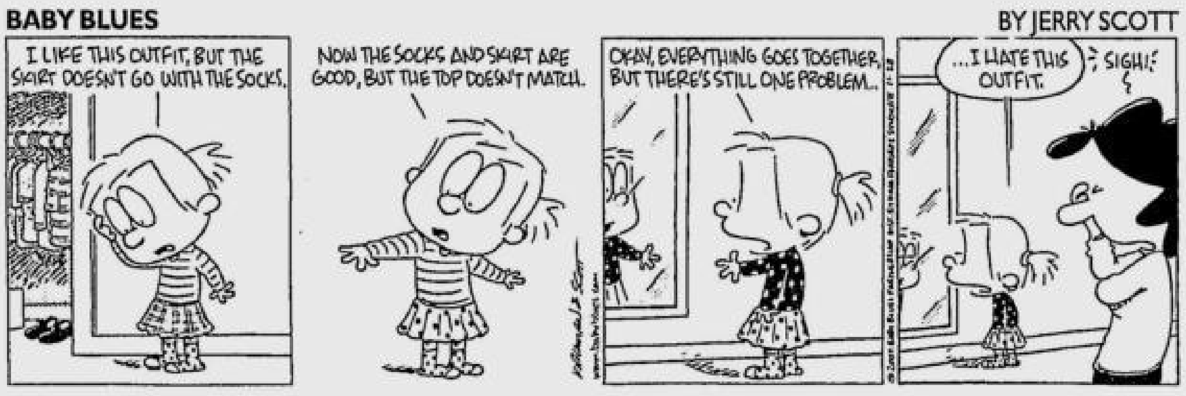
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


SO WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?
ZWIP
MOST PEOPLE CIRCLE THINGS IN CATALOGS. GARFIELD TABS THINGS IN COOKBOOKS
JIM DAVIS 11-28

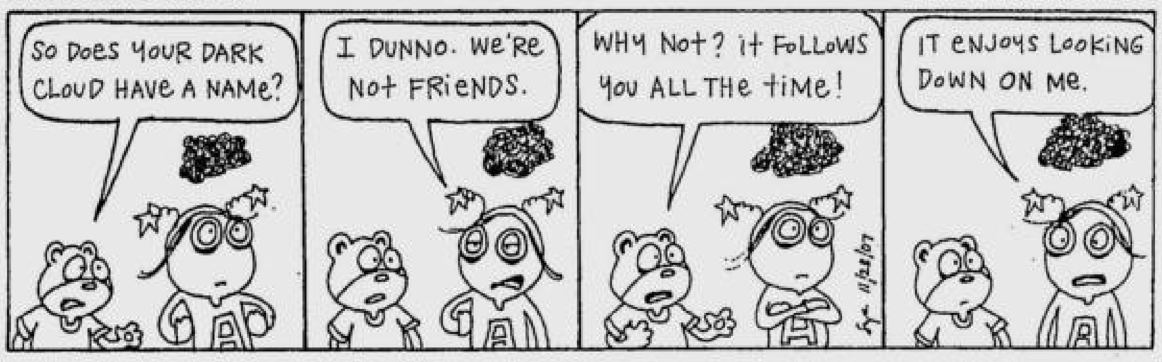
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I LIKE THIS OUTFIT, BUT THE SKIRT DOESN'T GO WITH THE SOCKS.
NOW THE SOCKS AND SKIRT ARE GOOD, BUT THE TOP DOESN'T MATCH.
OKAY, EVERYTHING GOES TOGETHER, BUT THERE'S STILL ONE PROBLEM...
...I HATE THIS OUTFIT.
SIGH!

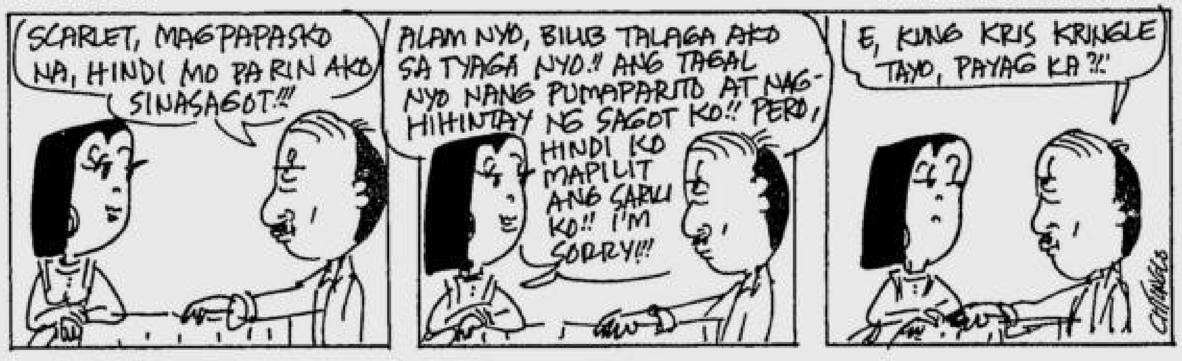
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


So DOES YOUR DARK CLOUD HAVE A NAME?
I DUNNO. WE'RE NOT FRIENDS.
WHY NOT? IT FOLLOWS YOU ALL THE TIME!
IT ENJOYS LOOKING DOWN ON ME.

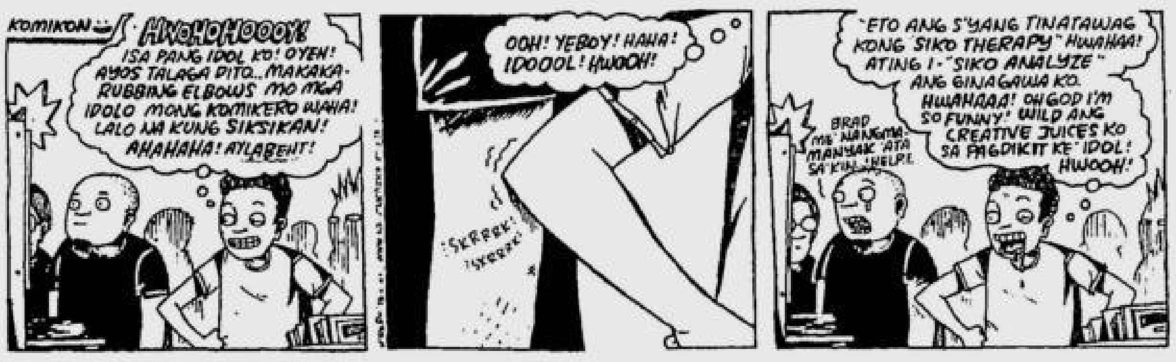
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, MAGPAPASKO NA, HINDI MO PA RIN AKO SINASAGOT!!!
ALAM NYO, BILIB TALAGA AKO SA TYAGA NYO!! ANG TAGAL NYO NANG PUMAPARITO AT NAGHIHINTAY NG SAGOT KO!! PERO, HINDI KO MAPILIT ANG SARILI KO!! I'M SORRY!!!
E, KUNG KRIS KRINGLE TAYO, PAYAG KA?!
CHIONGLO

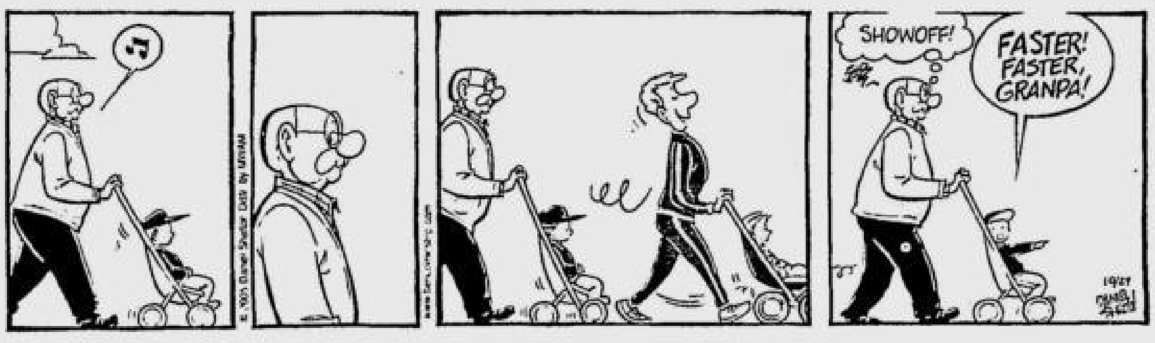
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

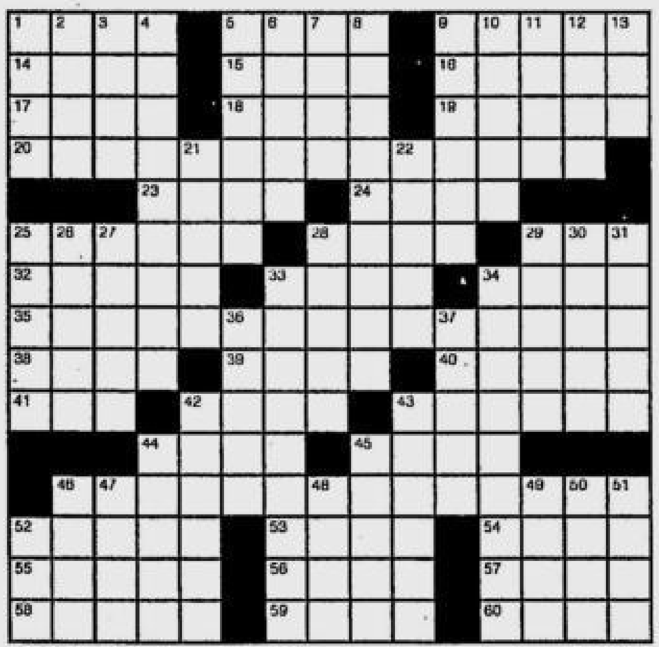

KOMIKON
HWOHOHOOOY! ISA PANG IDOL KO! OYEH! AYOS TALAGA DITO... MAKAKA-RUBBING ELBOWS MO MGA IDOLO MONG KOMIKERO WAHA! LALO NA KUNG SIKSIKAN! AHAHAHA! ATLABENT!
OOH! YEBOY! HAHA! IDOOOL! HWOOH!
SKRRRK! SKRRRK!
"ETO ANG S'YANG TINATAWAG KONG "SIKO THERAPY" HWAHAA! ATING I-"SIKO ANALYZE" ANG GINAGAWA KO. HWAHAAA! OH GOD I'M SO FUNNY! WILD ANG CREATIVE JUICES KO SA PAGDIKIT KE' IDOL! HWOOH!
BRAD ME NANGMA-MANYAK ATA SA'KIN! HELP!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SHOWOFF!
FASTER! FASTER, GRANPA!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
11/28/07

ACROSS
1 Genesis character
5 Opposite of fem.
9 Chubby, and then some
14 Medicinal fluids
15 Singer Fitzgerald
16 Convened again
17 Sharp taste
18 Con job
19 Saudis
20 Perry Mason's admission?
23 "The Virginian" author Wister
24 Govern
25 Impassive
28 Rhine tributary
29 Roast hosts, briefly
32 Imminent danger
33 "My Friend __"
34 Flue collection
35 Aesop's admission?
38 Dove sounds
39 Privy to
40 Actress Eve
41 Raggedy doll
42 Garbage vessel
43 Magician's word
44 Recipe directive
45 Hunter's quarry
46 Captain Bligh's admission?
52 Villain's look
53 Ditch around a castle
54 Astronomer Sagan
55 Bare
56 Take apart
57 One-celled plant
58 Color shades
59 Observed
60 Antique autos

DOWN
1 __ Spumante
2 Fizzled out
3 Florence's river
4 Flowering trees
5 Engaged, as gears
6 Old highway to Fairbanks
7 Eastern European
8 Film set employees
9 Delphi attraction
10 "Mr. Television"
11 Biblical twin
12 Kemo __
13 UFO passengers
21 Tough fabric
22 Surrounding glows
25 Virgo star
26 Grand __ National Park
27 "Citizen Kane" director Welles
28 Traffic director
29 Sulking periods
30 Ajax competitor
31 Shorthand, for short
33 Know-nothing
34 Public conveyance
36 Lawful
37 Destiny
42 Baby birds?
43 Running-back Walter
44 One cubic meter
45 Open space in a forest
46 Division word
47 Nasty
48 Unaided
49 Bargain basement event
50 Cogito __ sum
51 Ruer's word
52 Mach+ jet

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

U	R	S	U	L	A	■	M	O	L	L	■	C	H	I
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11/28/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have intelligence, wit and a marvelous imagination. Your sensitive nature and fine mind help you make profound observations about society and the people around you. You're an original thinker; you question everything. You're a loyal friend because friendships are meaningful to you. You're comfortable inside your own skin. Work hard this year to construct or build something important to you. **Birthdate of:** Jon Stewart, TV host; Ed Harris, actor; William Blake, poet.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a lovely day for you! Both the Sun and the Moon are in your fellow Fire signs. Arts and crafts and any kind of creative activity will be favored. Ditto for romance and sports. Enjoy your day!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Family discussions can go well today. Real estate deals also are favored. You'll get the support that you need from others.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): If you've had difficulty with friends and partners lately, this is the day to smooth over troubled waters. People are eager to be friendly and warm-hearted to you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're extremely productive at work today. This will apply whether you're working at home or working in an office. You've got the positive energy and attitude to get stuff done.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a marvelous, playful, flirtatious, fun-loving day! Get out and enjoy yourself. People want to be in your company.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can be very productive working alone today. In particular, research will go well. You've got the energy to find what you're looking for.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You have a lot of mental energy today. Because of this, you're unusually convincing and persuasive in all your conversations with everyone.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Business and commerce definitely are favored today. Now's the time to make the deal. It's a great day to shop or start a new job.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel powerful and enthusiastic . Make travel plans to go somewhere. Alternatively, go forward with ideas about publishing or getting further education. You rock!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The resources of others can help you today. If you want to borrow something or use something that someone else owns, the answer will probably be yes.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): What a wonderful day to schmooze and socialize with others! Talk to friends or groups. People are cooperative and happy to see you. This is a good day to discuss long-term future plans.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): It's easy for you to impress parents, teachers and bosses today. You don't even have to do anything different! You're in the right place at the right time, saying the right thing to the right person.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu

By Dave Green

	8	4	3	1	2			
		2			9	3	7	
		3			4			2
	7					1		9
8							5	3
6							4	
	5					2		
		7			1			
			4	8				

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Difficulty Level ★★★

11/28

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

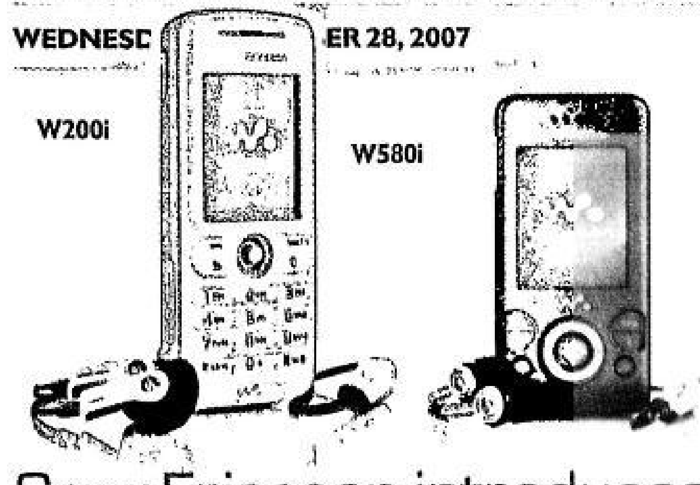
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	5	4	6	3	7	8	1	2
8	6	2	5	4	1	3	7	9
3	7	1	8	9	2	5	4	6
2	3	5	7	8	4	6	9	1
7	9	8	1	5	6	4	2	3
1	4	6	3	2	9	7	5	8
5	8	9	2	7	3	1	6	4
6	2	7	4	1	8	9	3	5
4	1	3	9	6	5	2	8	7

Difficulty Level ★★

11/27



W660i

Sony Ericsson introduces the Walkman phone for all

SONY ERICSSON BRINGS THE STYLE and function of its hugely popular Walkman phones to a broader market with a new and easy-to-use model. The Sony Ericsson W200i Walkman phone was recently introduced at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

The W200i Walkman phone can store up to 37 full-length tracks or about four albums and comes with a 128MB Memory Stick Micro™ (M2™) card. Listening pleasure is up to 18 hours long. The phone comes with Disc2Phone music management software for users to easily transfer and change music files on the phone via PC. There's also a dedicated Walkman player button that takes users straight to the music menu.

"The W200i is an affordable music phone that compliments your existing MP3 player," says Steve Walker, head of product marketing at Sony Ericsson. "It's not everyday that you want to carry lots of devices with you; and with the W200i you have enough music storage for your current playlist. And if you tire of these, the FM Radio allows you to quickly tune in to your favorite drive-time show."

The W200i comes in rhythm black and pulse white with the color-matched stereo headset HPM-64 to keep great sounds on the go. It's the first accessory to feature bass reflex, an innovation that preserves audio quality when the bass is turned up. The radio can also be used as an alarm clock, with the in-built speakerphone rather than the stereo headphones.

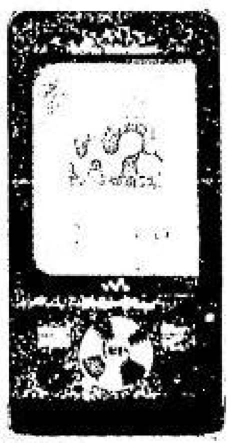
The W200i is a fully featured mobile phone with a VGA camera with 4x digital zoom, an integrated photo album, a full HTML web browser, push email, PC synchronization, infrared connectivity and video messaging. The phone is compatible with a number of Sony Ericsson music accessories.

Walkman promo with 2BU!

YOUR SONY ERICSSON WALKman phone music playlist includes all your favorite music all the time. What you hear is the soundtrack of your life.

So what was playing when you felt the highs of passing that final exam or the first day of vacation? What was playing when you got together or broke up and made up? Give us the best of your music memories to the weekly question and win a brand new Sony Ericsson Walkman phone!

This week's question is:


W910i

What song did you listen to when you experienced victory or had an incredible achievement? E-mail your answer to sonyericsson2bu@gmail.com. Include your name, age and contact information plus the song title, artist and music genre.

Deadline for this answer is on Friday, Nov. 30. A unique and funny answer will get you the Sony Ericsson W200i Walkman phone, with an integrated camera, expandable memory, MegaBass, web browser, 3D games, and up to 18 hours of listening pleasure.

Here it comes

Global sex survey seeks to determine 'sexual well-being'

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

WITH THE WORLD AIDS DAY JUST around the corner, condom brand Durex couldn't have picked a better time to finally come to the Philippines. After all, HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases continue to affect people.

Durex, which most Filipinos recognize as the condom brand regularly advertised on MTV, was registered as a brand name in 1929. The name comes from three principles that the brand maker, SSL International PLC, says it adheres to: durability, reliability and excellence.

Apart from pioneering the first lubricated condom, the first electronically-tested condom, the first anatomically-shaped condom, the first climax-prolonging condom, the first non-latex condom and the first condom with an easy-on shape, Durex is also the first condom brand that launched a web site and hosted a global sex survey.

In the Philippines, Durex is initially offering six variants: the Fetherlite ultra-thin condom for extra-sensitivity; the Strawberry flavored condom (which smells and tastes like the fruit); the Love gently-lubricated condom with an easy-on shape making it easier and comfortable to put on; the Tingle condom with a special lubricant which creates a gentle, tingling sensation; the Performa condom with benzocaine to help prolong climax for guys; the Pleasuremax condom with ribs and raised dots and a bulbous end for additional friction and maximum stimulation; and the Play pleasure-enhancing, water-based gel lubricant.

All these Durex products are now available in Watsons, Mini Stop, 7 Eleven and other select convenient stores and independent drugstores.

Fun, enjoyable and vital

Committed to understanding people's attitudes to sex, Durex annually publishes a study on global sex, the Durex Sexual Wellbeing Global Survey.

This year, the brand conducted the study with Harris Interactive market research agency. With more than 26,000 respondents from 26 countries, the survey was conducted in August and September 2006 and asked respondents about their health, wellbeing, social circumstances, education, beliefs, sex lives and attitudes toward sex.

The results of the global survey are divided into four parts, two of which have already been released while the remaining two are scheduled to be made public next year.

The first part identifies the drivers of satisfaction and recognize ways in which people's sex lives can be enhanced. Satisfaction is based on a combination of both physical and emotional elements.

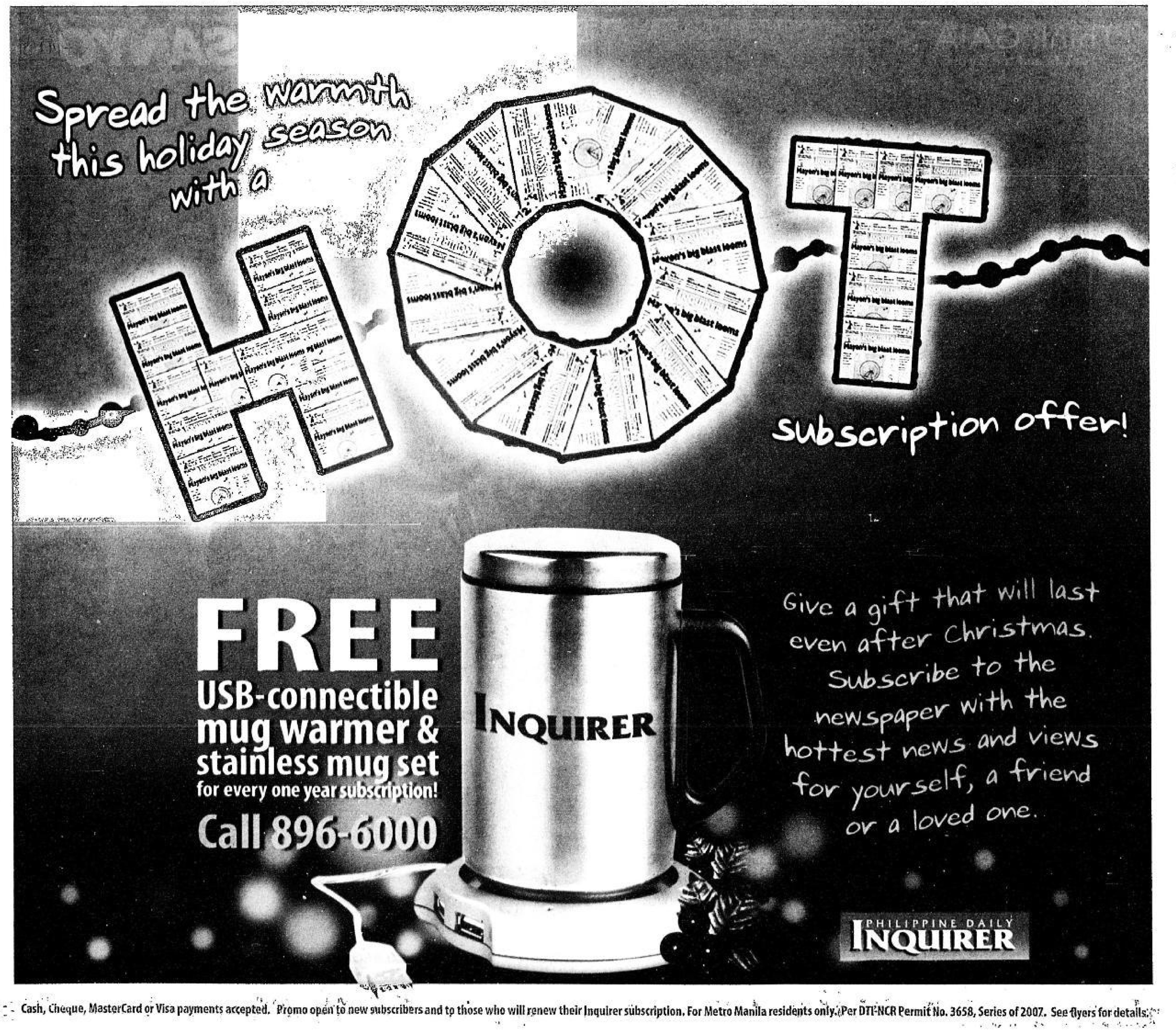
According to the satisfaction survey, 60 percent say that sex is fun, enjoyable and a vital part of life. However, only 44 percent are fully satisfied with their sex lives. Globally, twice as many men (64 percent) as women regularly have orgasms. Eighty-two percent who are sexually satisfied say they feel respected by their partners during sex while 37 percent agree that sex life has been positively affected by their first sexual experience.

As a whole, the results reveal that some of the fundamental elements of sexual satisfaction include good physical and emotional health, freedom from stress, physical chemistry, compatible libido and knowing how to give pleasure, excitement, variety and fun.

The second part of the study has the astonishing revelation that the bedroom satisfaction of people is mediocre, that they're not as happy as they could be or would want to be. This probably explains why, according to the survey, self-pleasure is widely practiced, with 83 percent of people across the globe admitting to having masturbated at some time.

When it comes to improving sex life, the report says that sensual massage is the most popular with almost six out of 10 people indulging in it, and that 58 percent believe it is acceptable for products aimed at enhancing sex life to be available in mainstream stores.

Visit www.durexsexualwellbeing.com
E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com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READY to serenade you tonight at the Church of the Risan Lord, UP Diliman

UP Singing Ambassadors in concert

THE U.P. SINGING AMBASSADORS presents its annual concert titled "Tulad ng Dati" at the Philamlife Auditorium, U.N. Avenue, Manila tonight, Nov. 28, 7:30 p.m., and at the Church of the Risen Lord, UP Diliman, on Nov. 30, Friday, 6 p.m. The concert features the new batch of UPSA trainees.

UPSA will perform new works such as Whitacre's "I Thank You God For Most This Amazing Day," Kodaly's "Battle Song," Bergh's "And Death Shall Have No Dominion" and new arrangements of "You Raise Me Up," "When You Believe," "Under the Sea," "Kailangan Kita," "Kahit Isang Saglit" and "Ikaw Lamang."

Christmas ditties like "Kumukutikutitap" and "Simbang Gabi" and modern arrangements of "An Evening in December" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" are also in the repertoire, plus choreographed numbers like "Joyful Joyful" and Birdland."

UPSA, 2002 Aliw awardee for Best University Choir and the only Asian choir that won the 2001 Grand Prize in the Guido d'Arezzo competition in Italy, was the Philippine entry to the Unesco International Music Prize in Paris in 2005.

Tickets are available at P250 and P500 each for the Nov. 28 concert at Philamlife, and at P300 (with 50-percent discount for students) for the Nov. 30 concert at the Church of the Risen Lord in UP.

UPSA CDs, which make for ideal gift items this season, will be available for sale at the gate.

Sales proceeds will go to the UPSA tour fund, which enables the group to continue representing the country in European competitions and festivals.

It also supports UPSA's Outreach Program consisting of scholarships for choral workshops here and abroad, as well as fundraising activities, visits, and serenatas for the aged, the sick, the orphans, the autistic, special and street children and other beneficiaries.

UPSA is currently involved in the "Sing For Me: A Call for Peace and Unity" project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). It aims to raise awareness on the plight of disadvantaged children (including victims of the Mindanao conflict and children in conflict with the law), and to raise funds to construct transition and transformation houses for them.

It also dreams of mobilizing the government, private sector and the citizenry in addressing these kids' needs through the holding of a simultaneous community singing project by choirs that have achieved international recognition. The planned Dec. 9 event will feature Metro Manila chorales and other leading singing groups from all over the country.

This event would hopefully qualify for a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest number of people gathered and singing together at one time.

Call DSWD at 9517438 and 9512801. For tickets, call 9249378, 0915-7135274, 0916-2652407, 0919-3742793; and 0920-9251891 for bulk sales.

Stylishly sporty

MORE AND MORE FASHION-FORWARD guys are choosing Portside's "performance" wear—clothes that are stylish but designed to suit their active lives.

A pair of olive green or navy blue cargo shorts, paired with a collared shirt with prints or colors, is a cool choice for that weekend out-of-town trip. When chilling out with friends after a game of badminton or basketball, Portside's khaki cargo pants and a graphic or retro-inspired short shows off individuality and an easy-going personality. If you're out to have some fun in the sun, get into warm weather cargo shorts and playful cartoon tees.

Portside is available at all Robinsons Department Store branches.

Hip kick-off party

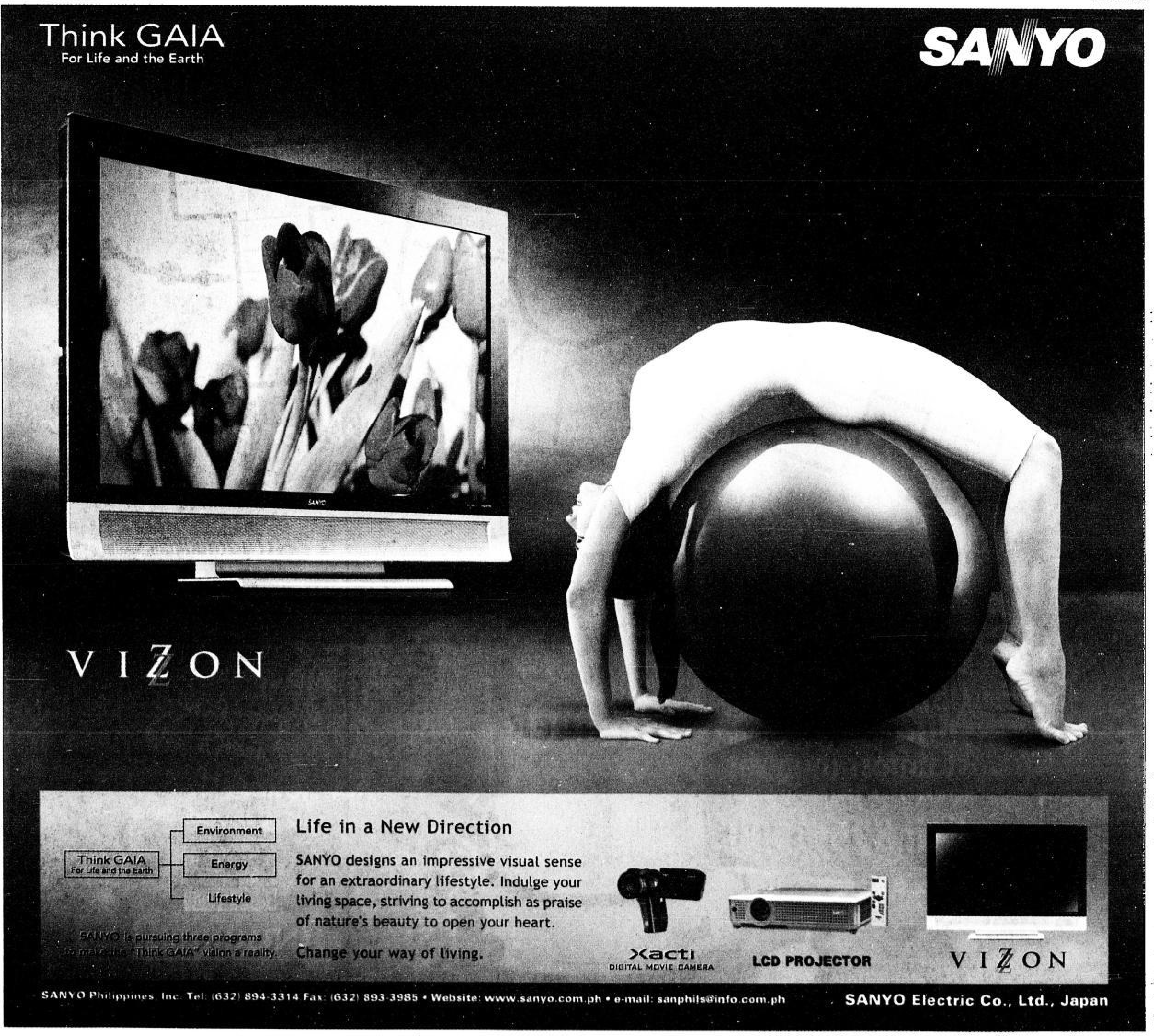
THE MOSSIMO 10TH YEAR KICK-OFF party happens tomorrow at the Decagon, Silver City, in Tiendesitas. The event is a grand preview of the Mossimo Holiday '07, Summer '08, and underwear collections.

"We want to show everyone what Mossimo is set to do for next year. This kick-off is a collaboration of great minds and talents for the benefit of the Cancer Warriors Foundation," says Mossimo marketing and PR manager Magnolia David.

The event, under Rico Comia's direction, features a festive Brazilian dance to launch the presentation of Mossimo's hip and trendy casual wear. The fashion show also features segments on jeans and underwear plus fire zipping and a capoeira showdown. Hot models from the Chameleon International Modelling Agency and the Escola Brasiliera de Capoeira will also walk down the runway wearing jewelry from Melissa Racella of Les chat de Paris. ETC's Sam Oh hosts the event.

Talented musicians Rocksteddy, Dianne Elise, Urbanation, 3rd Avenue, siblings Arnee and Jeffrey Hidalgo, and Barbie Almalbis are also slated to grace the kick-off party.

The event is for the benefit of the Cancer Warriors Foundation, a charity organization founded by cancer survivor James Auste that's devoted to fighting the disease.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Jordin sparkles

2bU! bags an exclusive interview with the youngest-ever 'American Idol' winner

By Mark Bonifacio
2bU! Correspondent

IT WAS ONLY LAST MAY WHEN Jordin Sparks, a high-school student from Arizona, won the title of "American Idol." At 17, she became the youngest winner of the reality television show's sixth season, joining Kelly Clarkson, Ruben Studdard, Fantasia, Carrie Underwood and Taylor Hicks in the winners' circle.

Since then, life has never been the same for this bubbly teenager. After her win, Jordin found herself traveling a lot for TV appearances and headlining the 56-city American Idol Live! Tour, together with her co-finalists.

She also spent time crafting her self-titled debut album under 19 Recordings/Jive Records, which was released this month.

It features the carrier single "Tattoo," produced by the hit-making duo Stargate (Beyoncé, Ne-Yo) and co-written by Amanda Ghost, whose impressive credits include James Blunt's "Beautiful" and "Beautiful Liar" with Shakira and Beyoncé. The single is now in the Top 5 of the top radio station charts in the Philippines.

This daughter of former NFL football player Phillipi Sparks (New Yorks giants and Dallas Cowboys) attributed her coping with the rigors of show biz with her father's occupation and growing up in a bi-racial household. But what people don't know is that Jordin nearly missed out being an "Idol" contestant altogether.

She was sent home on her first "Idol" try but with her perseverance, she tried again with her rendition of Celine Dion's "Because You Loved Me." The rest, as they say, is history.

INQUIRER 2bU! recently bagged an exclusive interview with Jordin Sparks:

What have you been up to lately?

I am in Chicago, Illinois right now and I'm on my way to a show.

How's life been since winning "American Idol" last year?

My life has definitely changed. It's very very different. I haven't been home very much. Since the "Idol" shows ended, I have been home for about a week and a half and I would leave home again. It's like a whole day here and half a day there. So it has been very crazy. I miss them, but other than that it's really awesome because the album is already out. I'm kind of freaking out.

That's great! How does it feel to be the youngest American Idol at 17 years old?

It's great! To be in the same shoes as Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood, it has been really insane. It has been so weird for me to think about it. But it's fun. I like it! I wouldn't trade it for anything.

How did the "American Idol" tour go?

The tour was a lot of fun! It was very awesome. I'm touring the country often along with my "Idol" friends, and what could be better than that. It was great that we were doing five songs a week, plus meet-and-greets and travel. It's also prepared me for my solo career.

What is the best part about performing whether on "Idol" or on tour?

I love being on stage and just singing. When I'm done and somebody comes up and tells me I touched them with the music I sang, that's one of the best experiences for me.

Do you still get together with your "Idol" batchmates? Which contestant are you closest with?

Oh, I got to see Blake and Melinda since the tour ended. Blake and I were in Los Angeles both working on our album, so I ran into him and I invited him to be in the music video. Melinda happened to be in California the same time, so I got to hang out with her. I also got to see Chris and Sanjaya. So I've been talking to all of them. We definitely keep in touch.

None of the guys there actually caught your attention?

(Laughs) Well, okay, so Chris Sligh is married. Phil is married. Sanjaya is Sanjaya (laughs). That leaves Blake and Chris (Richardson). They are both very attractive, but they are way older than I am. I see them more as brothers than as a romantic kind of thing.

I understand you were still in school when you won "American Idol." Do you still have time for your studies?

I was and I still am in school. I am in senior high school this year and I'm just trying to figure out how I'll be able to walk with my class, if I'll be able to do that at all. Maybe I'll do correspondence classes, try to find a tutor and just catch up because I'm a little bit behind.

What can we expect from your debut album?

The album has a little bit of everything in it. I'm very lucky that I got to do that because there are songs that are a little bit

JORDIN/G2

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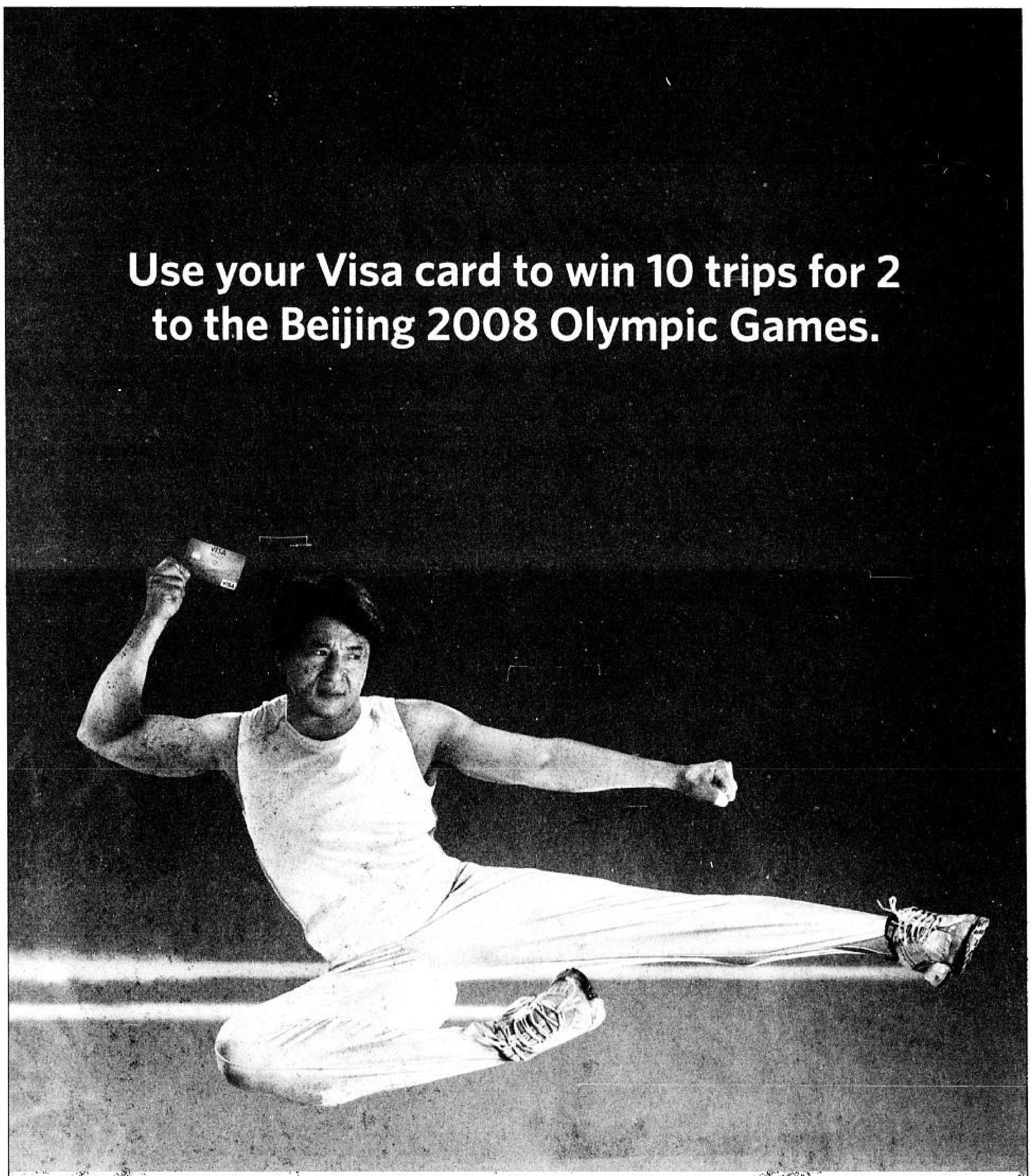

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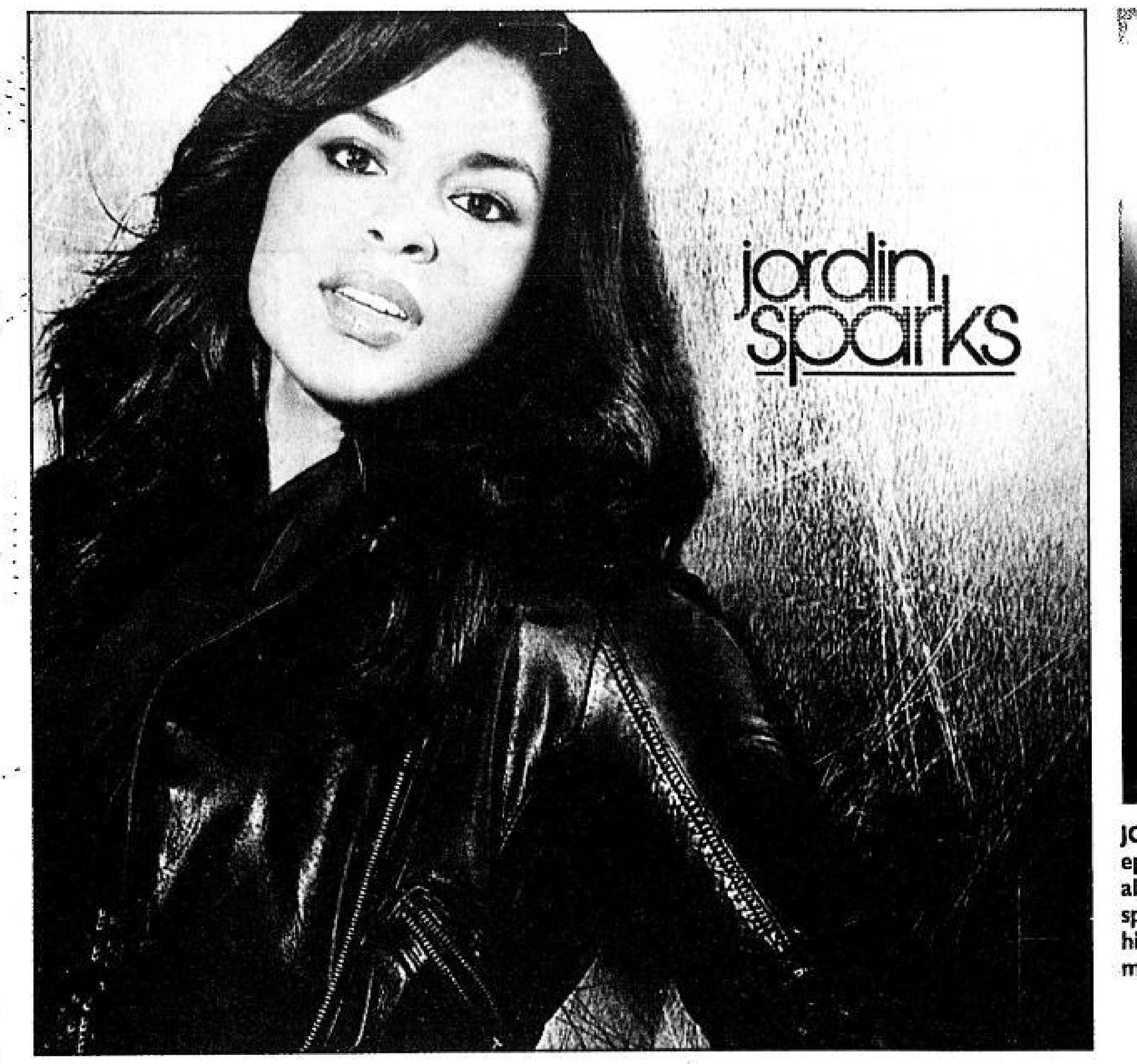


JORDIN Sparks eponymous debut album has already spawned a Top 5 hit in the local music charts.

Jordin sparkles

From page G1

guitar-driven as there are songs that are a little rhythmic. There are songs that are really happy and some ballads, too. It's a mix of everything.

Did you have a say on what your album is going to sound or did you just leave the direction to your producers?

The people I'm working with would ask me if I liked the song. I would say yes or no, then we would explain each of our sides. I've been very lucky that I did get to have an input on the album.

Can you tell us more about the recording process? I heard you worked with a team of" A-list" producers who worked with the biggest stars like Chris Brown and others.

I have a duet with him (Chris Brown) on my album, and it's a great song. I recorded it first, and I was like, "I like the sound with Chris on it" and he agreed to do it. There are also a couple of songs in the album that I co-wrote. I hope people will like it.

Any favorite singles in the album?

I love "Permanent Monday," the duet with Chris Brown called "No Air," and a really fun song called "Just For The Record."

Can you tell us more about your first single "Tattoo"?

It was one of the first songs that I picked for my album. I remember I was sitting there and they played it for me and I didn't really get through the whole thing. Then I decided, oh my God, I have to have this! I recorded it in just like under three hours. It was very cool.

The song just resonates with me, since I see that people do come in and out of other people's lives, whether it be a romantic relationship or family or a really good friend. I mean, they will always be a part of you, and you'll always have memories of them. That's how I see it.

Speaking of tattoo, do you plan to get one yourself? Or do you have one already?

Do I have a tattoo? I don't have one right now. Maybe when I turn 18. I would probably get one and it would be very small, very discreet, nothing big.

To quote your song, who is "in your heart just like a tattoo?"

Who is in my heart? Well, first, a lot of different people.

My great grandmother passed away not too long ago. She's there because I remember her and I didn't get to visit her a lot. She was my best friend. I stayed with her since I was 3 years old.

And anybody! Anybody that comes into my life.

Which song in the album describes your current state of mind?

I guess it would probably be "One Step At A Time," because everything is going by so fast. The song talks about going one step at a time. No need to rush. So that's what I'm doing right now.

Who are your musical influences? Which artists did you listen to while growing up?

When I was younger, my mom and my dad had different influences. My dad played Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston, and my mom played Bon Jovi, Pat Benatar, Heart and all those great artists. In my generation, I love Christina Aguilera. I listen to all of them so I have a lot of different influences.

I heard that you are such a fan of '80s music. What is it about '80s music that you like?

I'm not sure. My mom just played a lot of it while I was growing up, and I got to like the music.

And you're also into hardcore bands...

I'm not really sure why, I just like those stuff. There's something about the music that's awesome and that I have to listen to.

Given the fame and success you're experiencing right now, how do you stay grounded?

I don't know. I keep my parents and everybody here with me. They are still around me all the time, and I call my mom and dad every day, which is cool because when my head gets bigger, they're like, "Jordin!," and I'll do "Ohh, sorry!" (laughs). But they are always fair.

I also talk to my friends. They definitely keep me grounded because we go back a long time and they don't treat me differently.

What have you learned from all the blessings you've had so far?

That I'm getting stronger from all of it, and it's a lot of fun. It's a lot of hard work, but I wouldn't trade it for anything.

What do you do away from the limelight? Your hobbies and passions?

I love to read. Whenever I have free time, I sleep. I don't really have a lot to do. I play my guitar or surf the Internet. Most of the time I try to sleep.

What CDs are you listening to right now?

The new Chris Brown album—really, really great. I also got the new Britney Spears and Rihanna CDs.

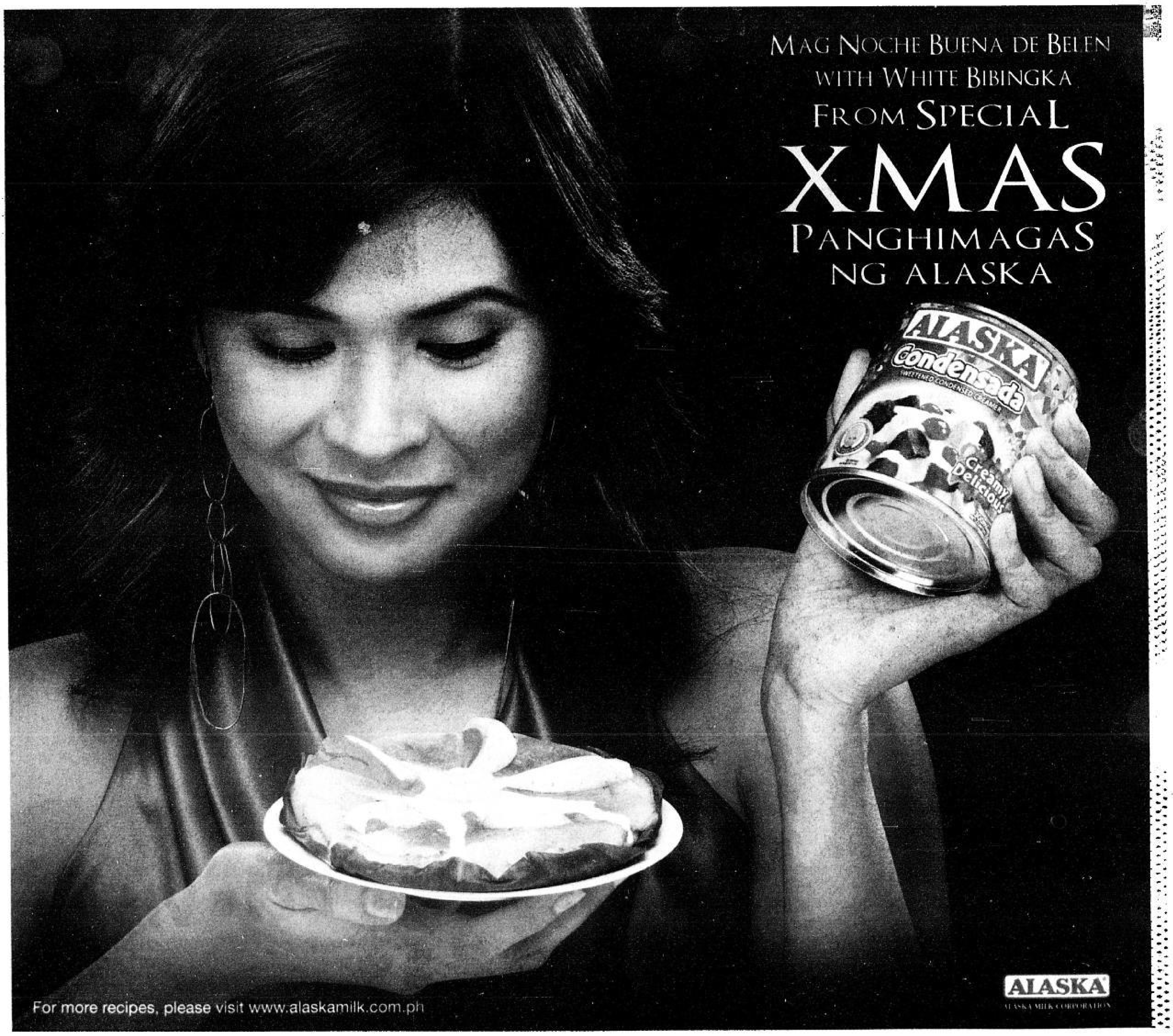
Who do you want to collaborate with in the future?

Maybe Christina Aguilera. I'd love to work with her.

Any message for your Filipino fans?

I just wanna say thank you so much for supporting me. I really can't wait to do a world tour and see everybody there!

E-mail the author at bedan_rainmaker @hotmail.com



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GLAM GEEK. I was just being myself, said Alodia Gosiengfiao

Lady Animé

Alodia Gosiengfiao recently won the search for Levi's Kawaii Girl in the Animax original production 'Mad Mad Fun'

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent
Photo by Tricia Gosingtian

BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL, ALODIA Gosiengfiao had to hide her love for animé and videogames.

"It was considered different from the usual stuff a female high-school student would be into," she says.

But it didn't take long before Gosiengfiao realized that being herself and showing her supposed geeky-ness was really fun and rewarding. So she went full blast with her uncommon interests.

She continued playing console, handheld, online and arcade shooting video games. She collected art books, colorful wigs and Pokemon cards.

She nurtured an intense love affair with animé, watching hours and hours of Japanese cartoons, drawing sexy female characters and doing cosplay, which entailed dressing up as characters from Japanese manga (comics) and animé (animation).

These unique interests, all reflected in Alodia's personal site (http://blackmage9.deviantart.com), have made her a media darling. Apart from cosplay fans taking her pics or asking for her autograph during conventions, several teen magazines have also featured the teener.

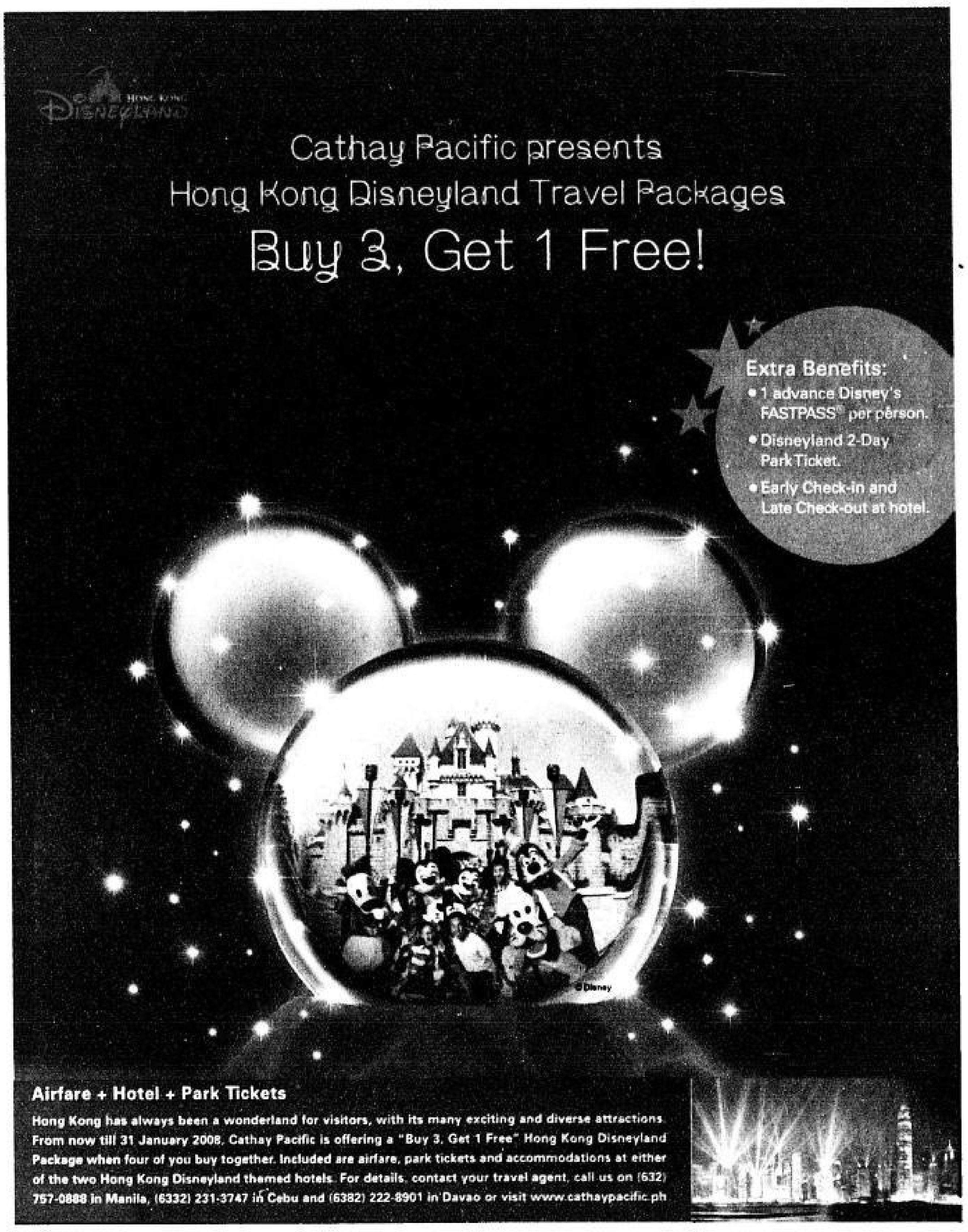
Gosiengfiao has even invaded television. She recently won the search for Levi's Kawaii Girl in the Animax original production "Mad Mad Fun," besting nine other fascinating females who were featured in previous episodes of the show.

Winning vouchers worth a whopping P100,000 from fashion brand Levi's, Gosienfiao emerged as the frontrunner after collecting the most number of votes in an online poll in the "Mad Mad Fun" website. The site attracted a host of gamers, cosplayers, animé fans and tech-savvy teenagers.

Asked why she got the crown, Gosiengfiao said: "I think [it was because] I was just being myself. I did not have to pretend I was someone else, since the real me really loves animé, games, art, music, cosplay and Japanese fashion."

Witness how she wins as Levi's Kawaii Girl in the half-hour "Mad Mad Fun Kawaii Girls Special" tomorrow, Nov. 29, at 7 p.m.

E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com



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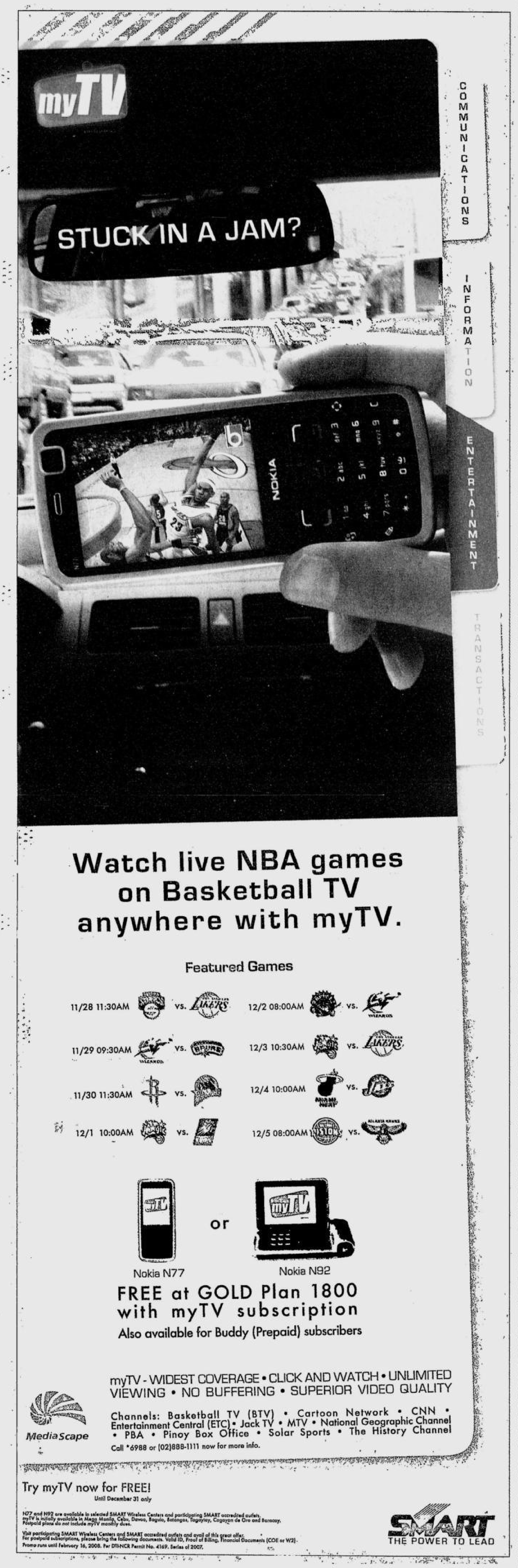

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Depending on their prey drive, temperament and parents, these dogs may be genial or fierce

The truth about pit bulls

Password

Serena Madrigal Gelb

MY PIT BULL IS NAMED LATTE BECAUSE she is coffee-colored with a white splash like cream on her nose and on her paws. She weighs in at about 75 pounds of pure muscle. In pit-bull jargon, she is ripped. Yet, she is gentle as a lamb and super-friendly. The most violent act she is capable of is battering you with her over-enthusiastically wagging tail. My mother says Latte is a golden retriever in pit-bull clothing. Latte sleeps in my bed every night and brings me to school every morning.

I have had Latte since I was 10 years old. We drove all the way to Los Angeles to hand-pick her from her breeder. She was one of a litter of 10 wriggling red nosed puppies. Before we decided to buy Latte, my mother had long conversations over the phone and through the web with Latte's breeder. She enquired about Latte's lineage and the temperament of her sire and dam.

Latte comes from a long line of champion-bred show dogs of the PR Castro Line. Show dogs, in order to compete in the ring, have to be comfortable when handled by strangers. Often judges will open dogs' mouths to check their dentition. Show dogs have to tolerate being handled and posed. Additionally, show dogs have to be comfortable with other dogs so that order in the ring is maintained.

Stable, friendly

Show dogs, at their best, are stable, friendly and beautiful dogs. Latte's parents were stable and friendly and very beautiful. We met them when we picked Latte up. The temperament and conformation of the parents are very good indicators for the kind of dog the puppy will likely be. Latte, I am proud and happy to say, turned out sterling like her parents.

My mom's pit bull is another story. Her name is Loquat. She is named after, as you may know, a tiny Chinese yellow citrus fruit. She is yellow and anything but tiny. She is 110 pounds of hard bulk. She has a gangster's mug and the short and explosive temperament to go with it. Her line, PR Peterson and PR Camelot, was bred in the Deep South (in Florida) as guard dogs and boar hunters.

She is not a pet in the conventional sense and her temperament is not suitable for an inexperienced pit-bull owner. Loquat is very devoted and affectionate to our immediate family, but only to them. She will go after a stranger in a heartbeat. In the day time, if she is not being walked with a head halter by my mom, she stays in her special area. At night she sleeps in my mom's bedroom.

She is not permitted to roam at will around the house. In the Southern US, her kind was and still is bred to go after big prey like wild boar. Wild hogs have savage tusks, will stand their ground and fight back. Pit bulls who are hog dogs have extremely high prey drive.

Temperament

Prey drive and temperament buzz are words often discussed in connection with pit bulls. As you can see, Latte has a temperament radically different from my mom's dog, Loquat. Friendly versus fierce. Pet/Show dog versus guard/hunting dog.

Dog breeders have taken advantage of the fact that canine life cycle is considerably shorter than a human being's, say, 15 years versus 85. This means that a breeder can, through successive generations, select characteristics they want to breed into their dogs. For instance, pit bulls range in colors from yellow and red dogs with red noses, to black-nosed pits of various colors and brindles. Particularly popular at the moment are blue pit bulls, ranging from dark steel gray to light silver with blue noses.

What goes for coat colors also goes for temperament. Therefore, breeders can choose to breed friendly dogs or otherwise.

Regarding temperament especially where it concerns big physically powerful dogs, my advice is, meet your prospective puppy's parents. Fierce parents produce fierce offsprings. Puppies from even-tempered parents grow up to be stable. All puppies are cute and friendly. Nature made them appealing and tractable for their own protection. But dogs mature into all sorts of different temperaments. Usually you can observe these changes after they hit the one-year mark or, for females, after their first heat. Remember chances are puppies will grow up to have the same temperament as their parents. Also, make sure you acquire your puppy from a reputable, responsible and moral breeder.

Prey drive is defined in the dictionary as the instinctive behavior of a carnivore to capture prey. In dogs, prey drive has been channeled by breeders in many directions. The prey drive of a golden retriever has been directed towards retrieving ducks, balls and other smaller objects. The prey drive of sight hounds such as grey hounds or whippets has been directed toward chasing mechanical rabbits in the race track. The prey drive of sheep dogs has been transformed into a strong herding instinct.

In early England, pit bulls were butchers' dogs, bred and trained to control bulls and cows as they were led to market. Their job was to control cattle who got out of line. The dogs would grab the bull by the snout. Also it is said, that a butcher on his way home from market, would, as a safe guard, keep his money in a pouch around his dog's neck. In England, bull and dog baiting, as well as catching rats as a gambling sports developed later as a by product of the dog's original job.

Many big dogs have strong prey drive. Some dogs have a hard time stopping themselves from chasing moving objects such as cars, ball, cats or even active young children. My advice, do not rough house with any big dog and do not run around the garden playing with your big dog lest you unleash a prey drive you cannot control. It is always better to err in the side of caution.

Pit-bull facts and myths

Pit bulls have strong jaw muscles and locking bites.

Compared to any little dog, big dogs have stronger jaws. A toy breed may snap at your finger without breaking skin, this would be untrue for any big dog. From my observation our extra large sized pit bulls do have strong jaws. They regularly effortlessly crack entire cow thigh bones to get to the tasty marrow in the center. We give them the thigh bones as treats. Raw and pork bones are great to keep dogs' teeth clean.

Pit bulls do have large mandibular muscles. When Loquat opens her mouth, you can see the pink jaw muscles exposed on either side of her face. They look almost two inches thick. However, pit bulls don't have jaws that clamp and lock like a dead bolt. My mom has opened up Loquat's mouth even when it was clamped on something she did not want to give up (like an intruder's arm?!).

Springpoles

Maybe pit bulls got their reputation of having jaws that lock because they enjoy hanging from spring poles. A spring pole is a device wherein a medium length thick rope is hung from a very large spring attached to a pole. Pit bulls enjoy grabbing the rope and tugging or hanging suspended in mid-air gripping the rope. It's a great way to exercise a pit. We have one in our yard.

Pit bulls climb trees

Yes, some pit bulls are inclined to climb trees. I have seen photos in books with pit bulls quite comfortably ensconced in the branches of a high tree. I never believed it until I saw with my own eyes. Latte climbed one up. One day when we first moved back to the Philippines and were still living in a rental, Latte climbed a tree to get to our neighbor's garden. She probably saw a cat she wanted to chase. Loquat, on the other hand, has no interest in climbing anything.

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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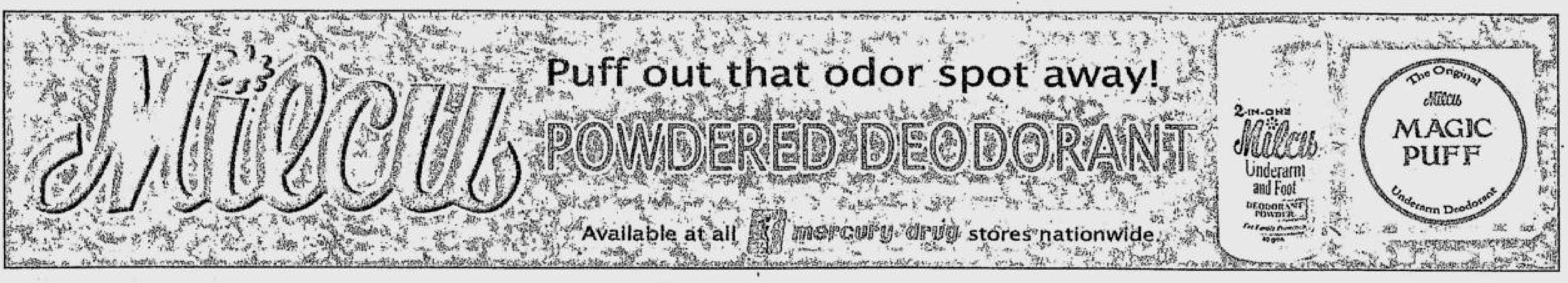
- ☐ Comedian 'outs' singer who's not gay Rushes /H4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Less than starry night for Famas

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

THE 55TH FILIPINO ACADEMY OF Movie Arts and Sciences (Famas) ceremony on Sunday night was small in star value, but big in determination.

Only Best Supporting Actress Gina Pareño ("Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo") and Best Supporting Actor Allen Dizon ("Twilight Dancers") were around to receive their acting awards at the Le Pavillon in Pasay City. Judy Ann Santos (Best Actress, "KKK"), Cesar Montano (Best Actor, "Ligalig") and Joey Reyes (Best Director, "KKK") were no-shows.

Louder, please

German Moreno, presenting the German Moreno Youth Achievement Awards to JC de Vera and Maja Salvador, had to urge the audience to "clap louder."

He said, "I believe and respect Famas. It was the first to give recognition to local artists [in 1952]. *Kahit naghihirap*, it continues to recognize excellence."

Mounting the show—originally set earlier this year, in June—was not easy for the beleaguered organization. "It almost never pushed through," said Sonny Padua, vice president. A feud among the officials last year resulted in several lawsuits seeking to take control.

Message from Rudy

His voice breaking, Mark Anthony read the thank-you message of his father, Rudy, this year's Fernando Poe Jr. Memorial awardee. Rudy is suffering

LESS/ H3

JOLINA Magdangal, Golden Artist Awardee

GINA Pareño, Best Supporting Actress

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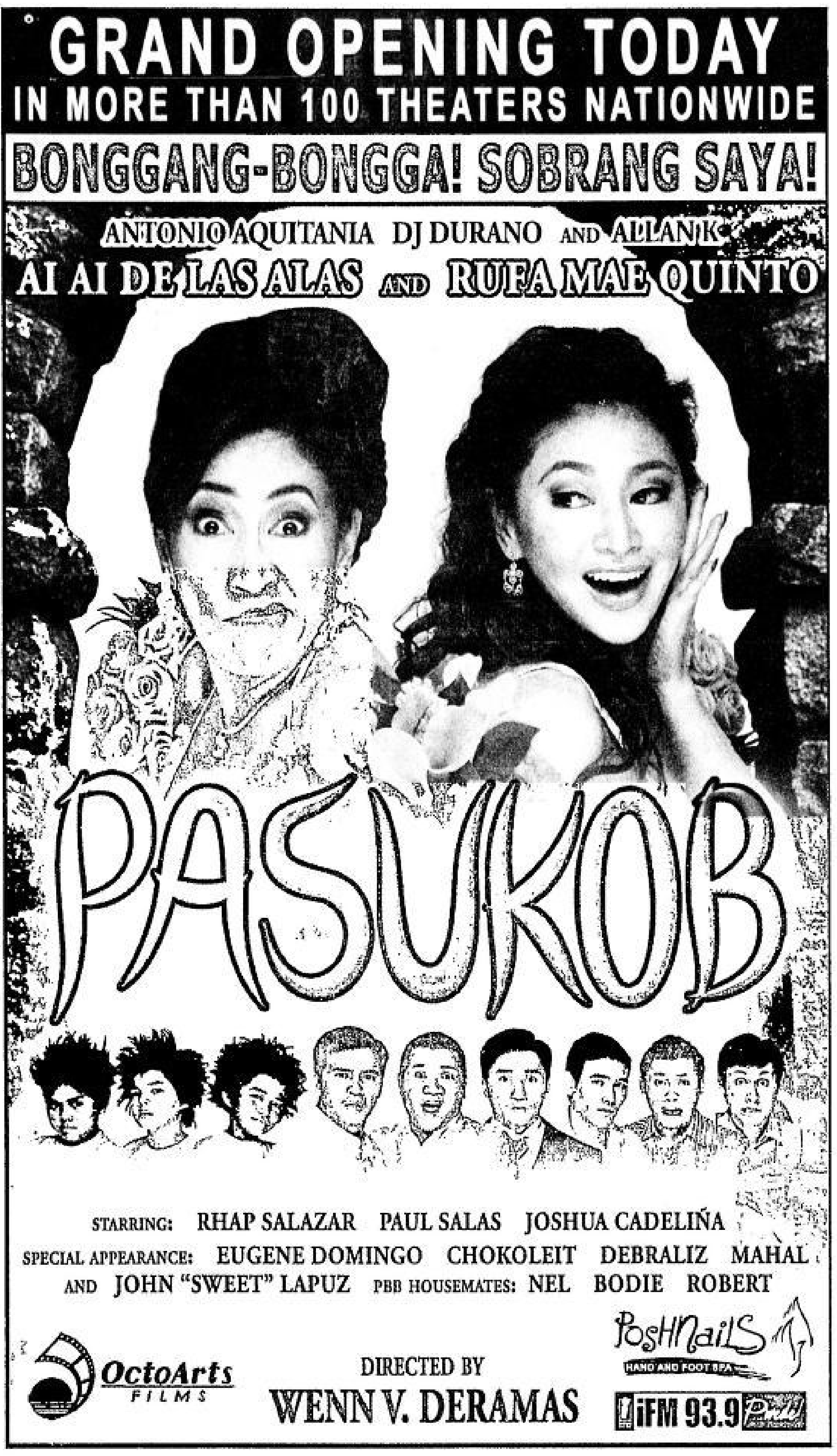
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5	THE KINGDOM	11:45 , 2:30 , 5:10 7:50 , 10:30 R-13

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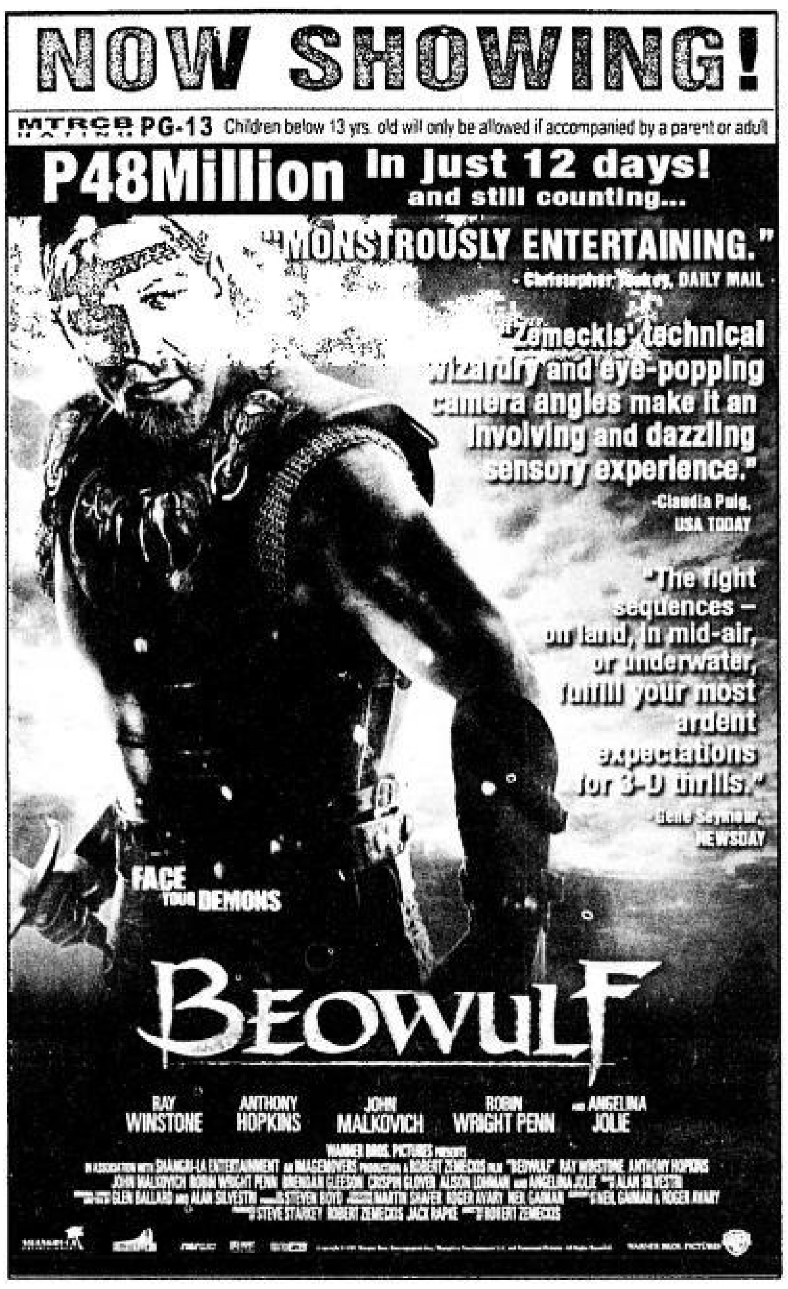
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Lani on Bong's new love child

LANI MERCADO FINALLY ADMITTED THAT her hubby Bong Revilla has a love child with beauty queen Josephine Canonizado in an entertainment magazine tell-all interview. I have been hinting on that in this column since day one.

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Funny, there was a report on TV that their camp was planning to sue me for libel when I wrote about Bong and Josephine's clandestine affair. And Bong kept downplaying the issue saying, "*Di totoo 'yon.*"

Oh, well… that's the way it goes in Pinoy show biz. When controversy strikes, I just do it my mom's way and "See True" the celebrities' subterfuge.

Dream wedding

OctoArts Films' powerhouse cast comedy film "Pasukob," which opens today, has all the right ingredients to make you laugh to the bones. Imagine having Comedy Concert Queen Ai Ai de las Alas and bombshell Ruffa Mae Quinto in one movie.

It's a spoof of "Sukob" and other horror films. Ai (Julia Rose) and Rufa Mae (Jenny Rose) find their lives linked when they prepare for their respective weddings.

What's their dream wedding and thoughts about marriage? "I want a garden wedding in a cold place," Rufa Mae says. "When I get married, *gusto ko* for keeps. I'm willing to be a full-time housewife but my husband should let me decide when I want to stop working."

As for Ai, she still believes in marriage even after having failed the first time. "There are no mistakes. Only lessons learned," Ai says. "I learned *na 'wag ng magluka-lukahan dahil sa lalake at 'wag ng pumatol sa may-asawa kasi malas.*"

Living up to their movie's title, the two comediennes have found "shelter" in each other. Ai serves as Rufa Mae's "spy" when her BF/date is flirting around while Rufa Mae has taught Ai how to be lighthearted.

Their friendship has become an umbrella as they weather show biz storms.

Four years

Aubrey Miles and Troy Montero celebrated their fourth anniversary in Amanpulo. Anything she wants to change in Troy? "He's too generous to a fault. When we're out, he ends up paying for the bill even of people we just met," Aubrey says.

That same big heart of Troy has "Aubrey" written all over it.

Do the math

A reader named Louise (gorgeousme828@yahoo.com) e-mailed me an article from a Visayan tabloid (Banat, 11/24/07) wherein Cutie del Mar was quoted as saying that she and Martin Nievera split up in May 2006. "Wasn't Katrina Ojeda already four months pregnant at that time since she gave birth October 2006?," Louise asks.

Hmm… Do the math, do the Mart(in).

Lesson learned

I teased Dennis Trillo: "What will you tell your son Calix someday when he asks you about the Carlene-Cristine tiff over you?" His answer? "I'd rather he not know (laughs)."

And what love advice will he give Calix? "Be very careful and make everything clear."

Dennis has apparently learned his lesson well. Scandal can be a great teacher.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

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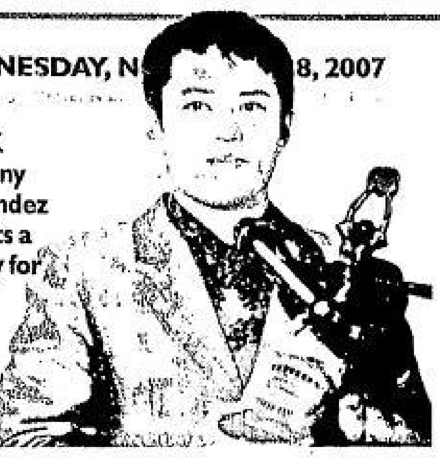

MARK Anthony Fernandez accepts a trophy for Rudy.

Less than starry night . . .

From page H1

from cancer.

Celso Ad Castillo, one of two recipients of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award (the other is actress/producer Gloria Sevilla), proudly said he was currently making his 61st film. Castillo, 64, has been a filmmaker since he was 21.

Show hosts Jean Garcia and Lani Mercado appeared to be having a great time onstage, despite several technical problems in the course of the three-hour show.

No mic

At one point, while the cameras were rolling, Jean had to run backstage as the production staff had forgotten to give her a microphone.

Faith Cuneta sang a medley of movie theme songs and sexy starlet Julia Lopez performed a dance number. Golden Artist Awardee Jolina Magdangal also sang a song.

Spotted in the crowd were Snooky Serna, Melissa Mendez, Bella Flores, Maria Isabel Lopez, Boots Anson-Roa and film producer Marichu Vera Perez.

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1	MR. MAGORIUM MTRCB. GP	
2	KINGDOM MTRCB R-13	12:00 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
3	HITMAN MTRCB R-13	2:05, 4:30, 6:55, 9:20
4	ENCHANTED MTRCB GP	2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
PREMIERE THEATRE	FRED CLAUS (GP)	2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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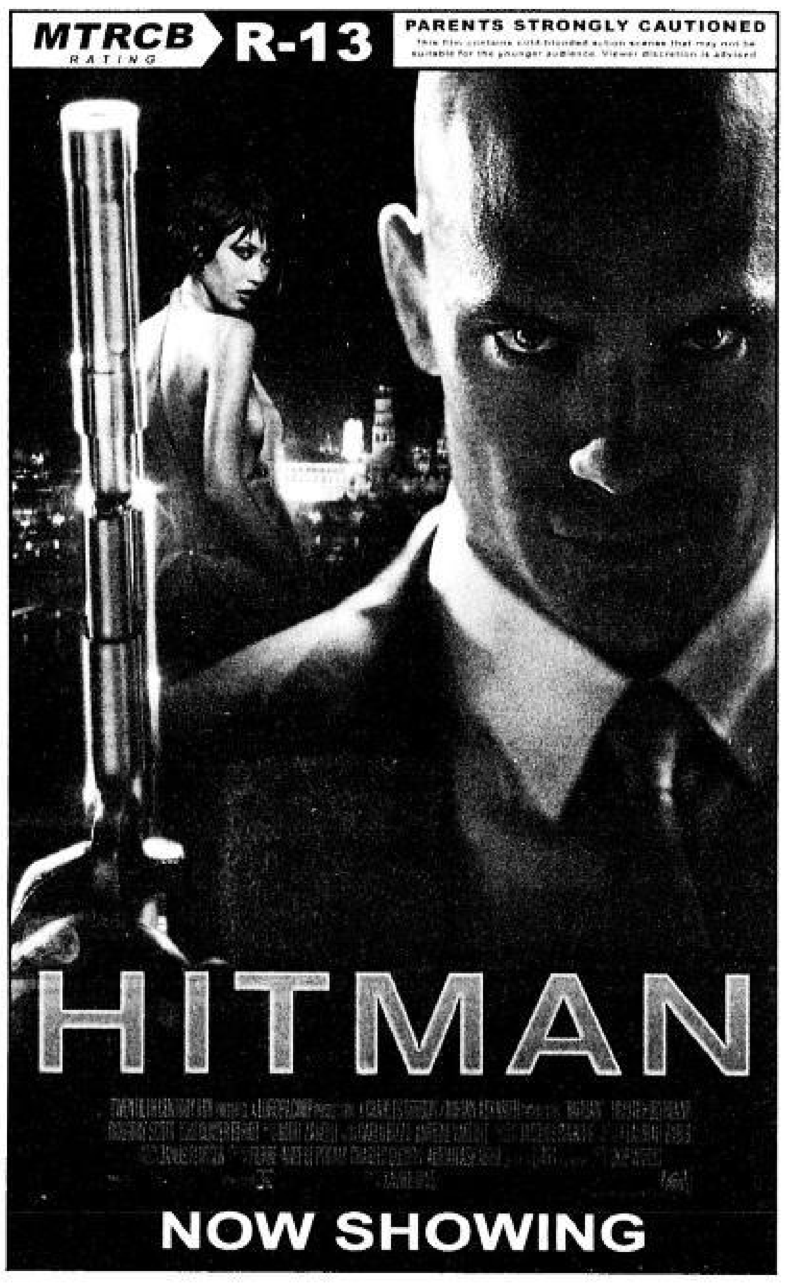

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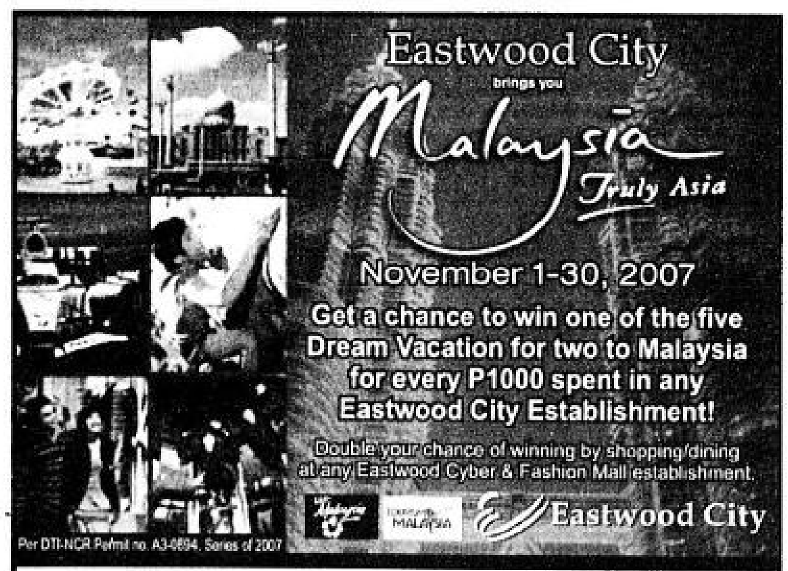

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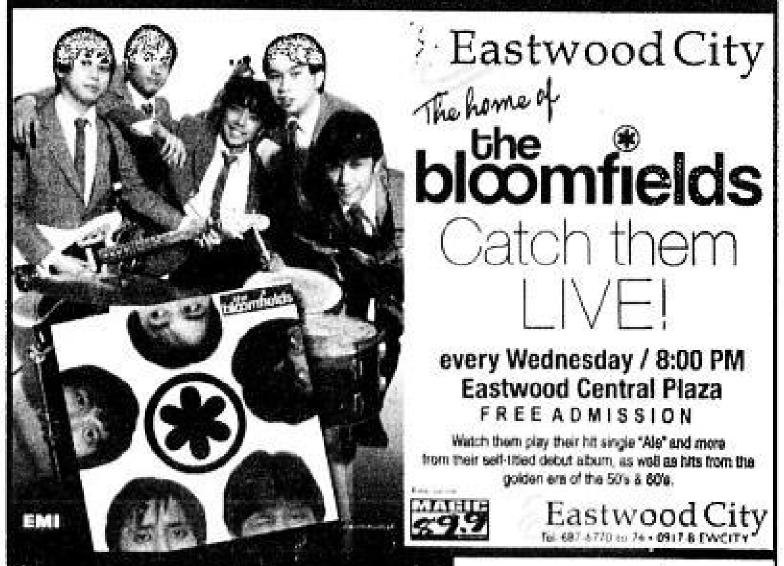

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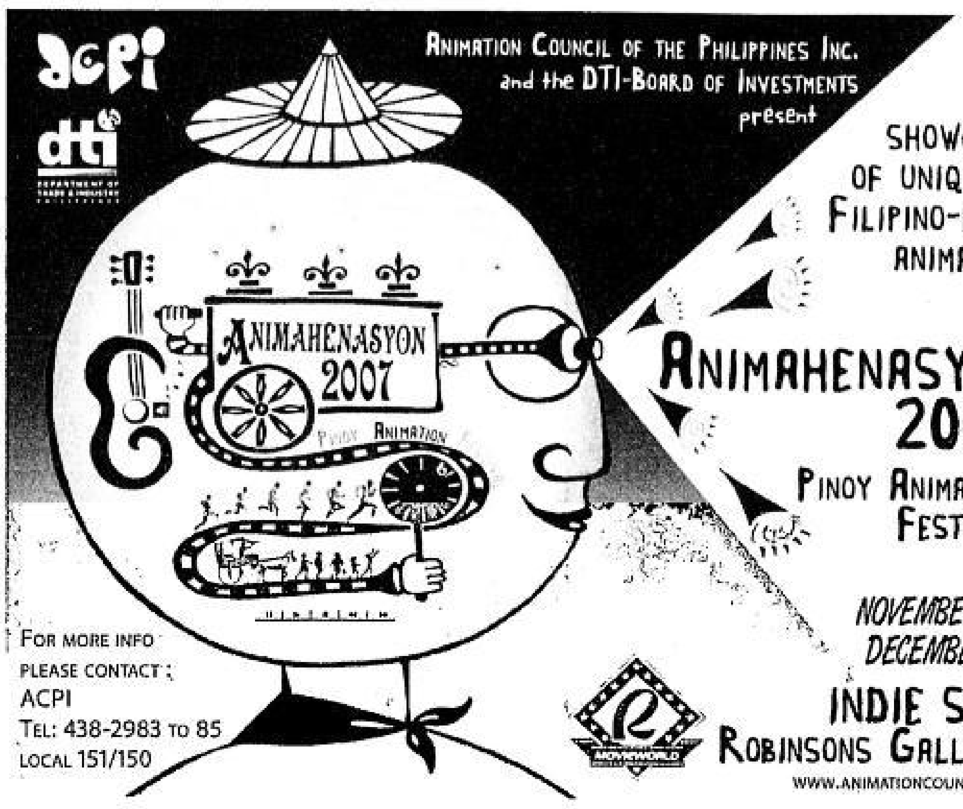
1	MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM	2:00, 4:15, 6:30	G
	ONE MORE CHANCE	8:00, 10:40	PG-13
2	THE KINGDOM	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 11:00	R-13
3	ENCHANTED	3:05, 5:35, 8:05, 10:35	G
4	FRED CLAUS	3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:05	G



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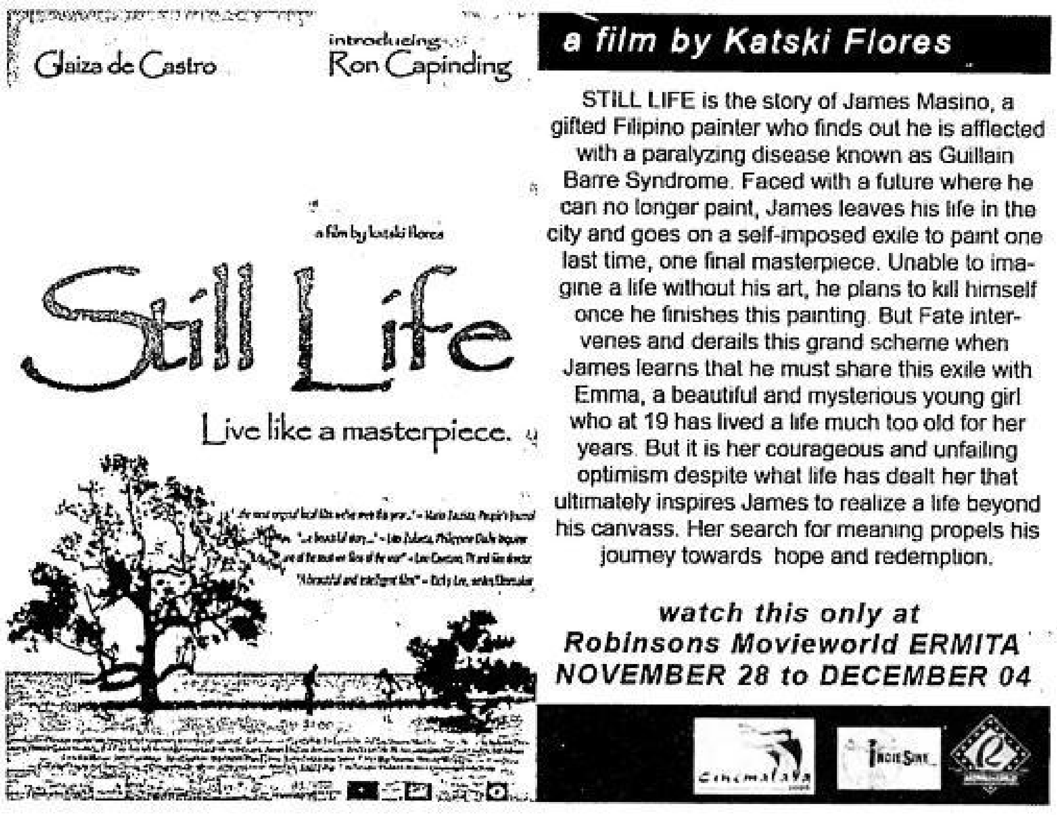

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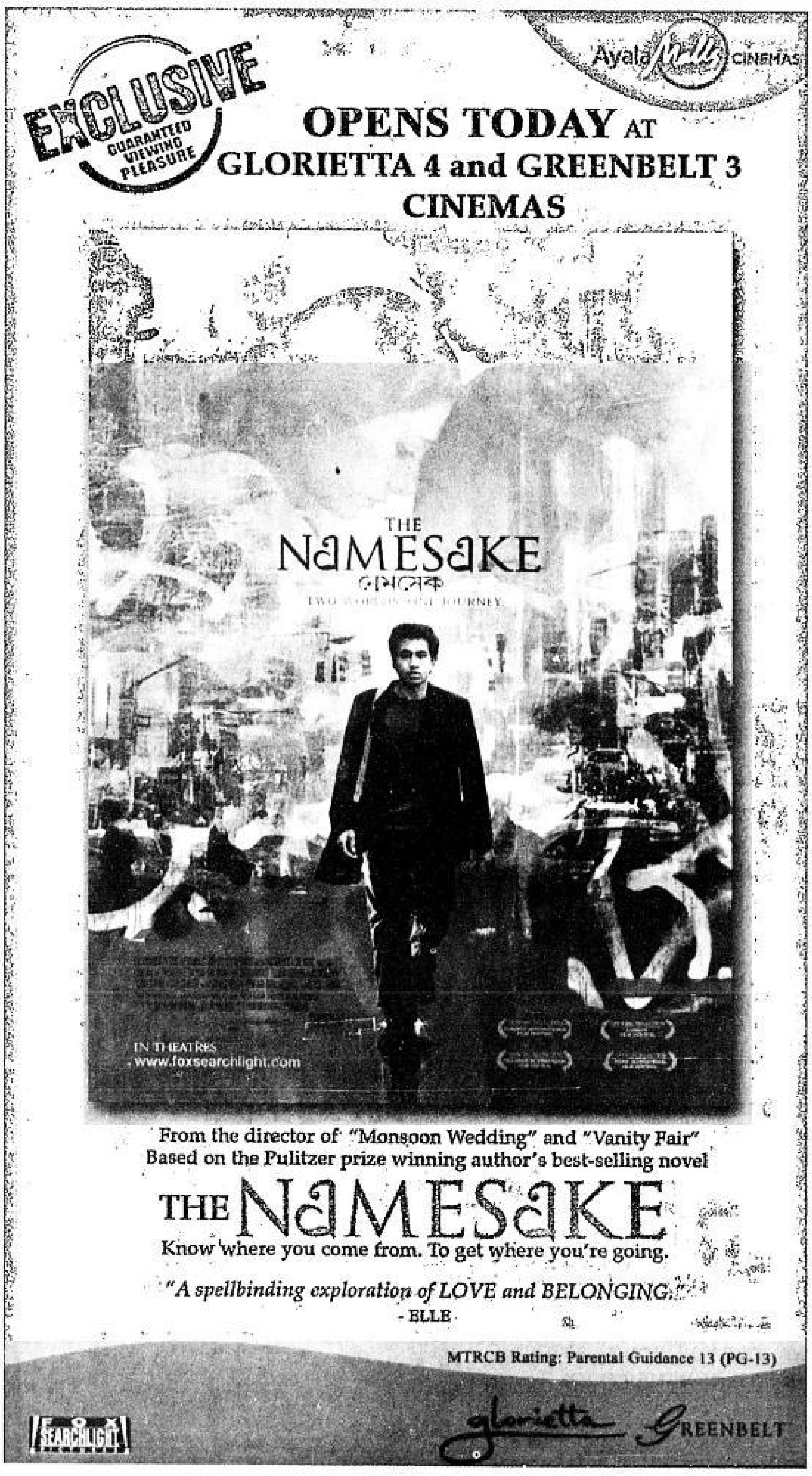

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FRED CLAUS

Comedian 'outs' singer – but wait, he's not gay!

By the Inquirer and Inquirer.net Entertainment Staff

LOQUACIOUS COMEDIENNE IS known for her bawdy humor.

In a recent show at a suburban school, she traded barbs with Male Singer, who seemed game—and just as quick-witted.

Then it came. LC quipped: "I never knew *bading* [gay] *ka pala!*"

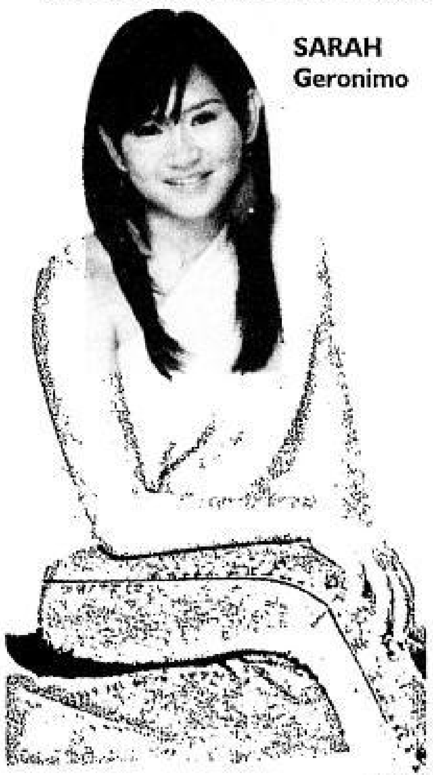
MS was too stunned to react.

Mum's the word

This hunky newcomer grew up in a neighborhood where a veteran actress used to live.

The actress became close to the stud's parents, witnessing the family's ups and downs.

When the guy, rumored to be gay, bumped into the actress recently, he whispered to her: "Please don't tell anyone about my past."



SARAH Geronimo

Sarah and spice

We love Sarah Geronimo in her Hapee toothpaste ad. And we hear her latest CD with the hit "Ikaw" is selling like the proverbial you-know-whats.

However, her latest endorsement deal is not for hotcakes but for burgers—Jollibee's Spice! The TV ad is directed by Jun Reyes.

RUSHES

$13M paycheck

BEIJING—Chinese action star Jet Li is set to rake in 100 million yuan ($13 million) for his latest movie, a record for an actor in a Chinese-language film, state media reported on Sunday.

Nearly half of the $40 million budget for "The Warlords" went to the cast, among whom were Andy Lau, Takeshi Kaneshiro and Xu Jinglei. *Reuters*

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's show biz gab fests. (And why we are moved, if we are moved. Thanks to GMA 7's "Startalk" and ABS-CBN's "The Buzz.")

- Iwa Moto being FHM Singapore cover girl:

"*S'yempre sa* Singapore, *ibang* level *na, 'di ba? Siyempre ibang bansa. Siyempre ang dami namang [ibang] artista tapos ako 'yung napili.*" (She's happy; we get it.)

- Ai-Ai delas Alas, on her love scenes with Robin Padilla in a forthcoming movie:

"*Sabi [ni Robin], 'di daw siya uurong. Sasaliksikin ko kung ano bang meron [siya].*"

- Ethel Booba on why she bolted "Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity Edition 2"

"*Nu'ng una, 'yung … meron pa akong dalang* razor, *'yun sobrang miss ko siya* (Janvier Daily). *Pero ito, iba na …* between me and Kuya *na. Alam ng mga* housemates *kung bakit tumagal pa ako ng ilang linggo.*"

"*Sobra na ang ano eh. Araw-araw, puro pisikal na 'yung ginagawa namin doon. Sabi ko nga, yung magiging premyo ko doon kung halimbawa tumagal ako, pang-reretoke ko nanaman ng katawan ko.*" (In short, *'di kaya si Kuya.*)

- Rufa Mae Quinto on rumors that Dennis Trillo was the reason she broke up with Rudy Hatfield:

"*Di ko na natanong* [*si* Rudy] *kung nagselos siya. Mababaw naman siguro na dahilan ['yun] para … mag-*break *kami. Kasi* we were together for six years." (In short, maybe?)

- Ruffa Gutierrez on her billing in the forthcoming movie "Desperadas"—that she skipped the Subic shoot because of it:

"*Sumipot ako sa* Subic. With regard to billing, I think no matter how big your name is or how small … *ang importante* in the end *pa rin* is your performance." (In short, no.)

- Ruffa, on finding a new love after Yilmaz Bektas:

"*Parang ayoko eh. Hindi ako naghahanap. Ayoko rin i-*entertain *ang* thought *na 'yun kasi hindi pa talaga* closed book *'yung sa amin ni* Yilmaz." (In short, not yet.)

- Dina Bonnevie, on being called "grandma" on account of daughter Danica's pregnancy:

"*Parang ayokong gamitin ang* word *na* 'grandma.' *Pwede bang* next year *na … pag talagang isinilang na 'yung bata.*" (In short, "Oh no!")

Piolo's prayer

- Piolo Pascual's marriage plans:

"*Gusto ko po*, in five years, *kung ibibigay ni* Lord *ang* perfect mate. *Pinagpe-*pray *ko po, sobra-sobra.*" (*Ay, 'wag sobra.*)

- Piolo on Shaina Magdayao's first screen kiss with him:

"Actually, *na-ilang po ako* for me. *Sabi ko sa kanya, alagaan na lang niya ako kasi hindi naman ako sanay, 'di ba? Mahirap na. Alaga lang. Baka mapagalitan ako ng nanay ko eh.*" (Hey, that's her line!)

- Lorna Tolentino on facing continued trials due to husband Rudy Fernandez's battle with cancer:

"*Hindi man ako ganoong katapang, kailangan maging matatag ako—para sa kanya at para sa mga bata.*"

- Marian Rivera on her apparent gap with "Marimar" co-star Katrina Halili:

"*Nag-uusap po kami sa* set *pero hindi kami* close, *na* close *na* close." (There's a new level of close, got that.)

- Tanya Garcia on her difficult pregnancy:

"I never thought *na mawawala siya kasi nag-ingat naman ako eh. Nung in-*advise *ako ng* OB *ko na tumigil sa pag-aartista*—while I was doing 'Super Twins' nagpaalam ako right away."

- Mark Lapid, on marriage plans with Tanya:

"*Darating din 'yun. Hindi ho namin minamadali.* Definitely there [are] plans *pero sa ngayon di po muna kami makapag-sabi kung kailan.*" (Ha?)

- Tanya, on Mark's previous marriage with a Korean woman, Yuri Park:

"In time, *magsasalita ako* about that … masasagot lahat 'yan." (Ah.)

IWA Moto

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Dennis the …

- Cristine Reyes's lawyer, Dexter Licuanan, on the settlement between her client and Carlene Aguilar:

"[It was my] idea. I saw the interview of Carlene. *Nakita ko 'yung kanyang* [position]. I called Cristine [and asked] about her reaction. [She said] she felt the same way. I told her [it would be] the Christian thing to do. And we came to an agreement. I met with Carlene. I would also like to thank her mom, [who] trusted me and [understood] our situation. This was just a big misunderstanding, and … I'm happy to announce we're in fact able to forge peace."

- Cristine's reaction:

"Peace. *'Yun ang importante eh. Mahirap may kaaway. Kaya nga nakipag-ayos tayo.* Relieved *na ako. Sobrang* happy *na ako.*"

- Carlene's reaction:

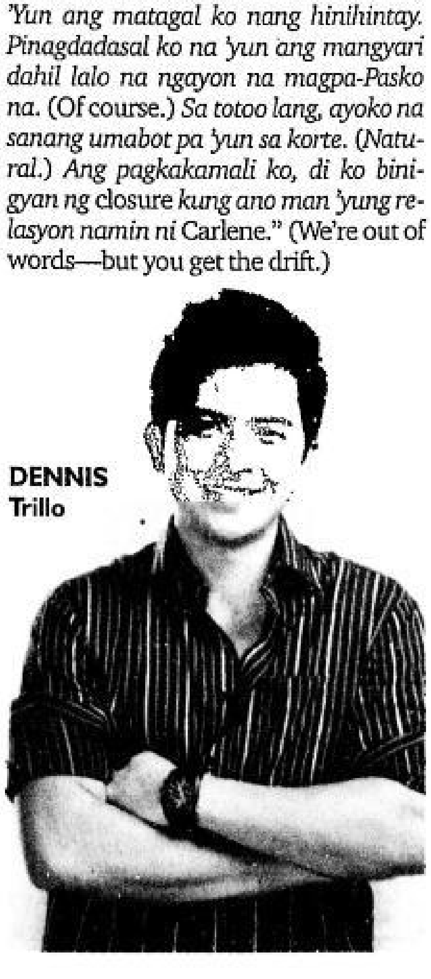
"Ako naman, happiness [ang importante]. (To Cristine) Thank you *dahil nakinig ka sa akin.* And thank you *din dahil naintindihan kita eh.*"

- Licuanan on Dennis Trillo's involvement in the settlement:

"[He had] nothing to do with this." (Smooth.)

- Dennis Trillo's statement:

"*Syempre masaya ako.* (*Syempre.*) *'Yun ang matagal ko nang hinihintay. Pinagdadasal ko na 'yun ang mangyari dahil lalo na ngayon na magpa-Pasko na.* (Of course.) *Sa totoo lang, ayoko na sanang umabot pa 'yun sa korte.* (*Natural.*) *Ang pagkakamali ko, di ko binigyan ng* closure *kung ano man 'yung relasyon namin ni* Carlene." (We're out of words—but you get the drift.)



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Israelis abuzz about Seinfeld

ISRAELI Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (left) meets comedian Jerry Seinfeld in Jerusalem. REUTERS

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL—ISRAELIS ARE buzzing about Jerry Seinfeld, who's in the Holy Land to promote his new animated movie about bees.

Seinfeld makes an unlikely folk hero in this Hebrew-speaking Mediterranean nation, with his nothing-happens comedy genre set in the high-rise apartment buildings of New York City and based on rapid-fire English dialogue..

But folk hero he is, as evidenced by the massive local media coverage his visit is receiving, and how references to his humor creep into serious items in the news.

"Yada, yada, yada," said TV political analyst Amnon Abramovitz Sunday about upcoming talks at a high profile Mideast summit meeting called by US President George W. Bush, quoting one of the "Seinfeld" show's best-known phrases meaning "nothing."

And with the prospect of Israel and Syria restarting peace talks that could end up with Israel giving the Golan Heights back, Jewish settlers in that disputed territory say they're more interested in Seinfeld's visit than the summit.

ISRAELIS/13

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9 HITMAN
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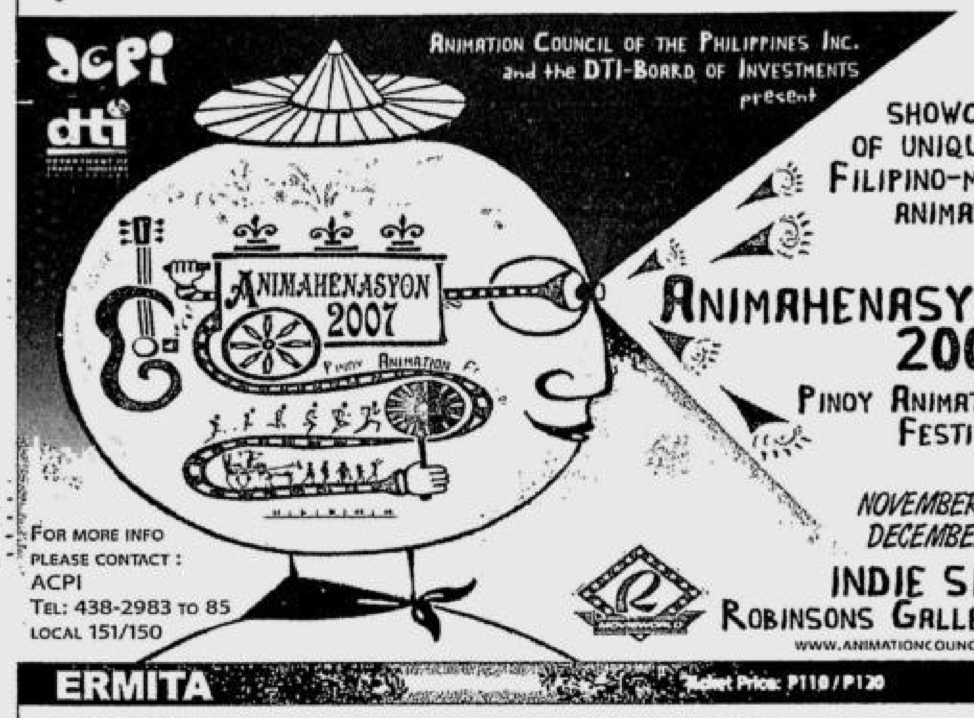

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1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2 FRED CLAUS
3 PASUKOB
4 THE KINGDOM
5 ONE MORE CHANCE

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P 90 / P95 (045) 892-2348

1 PASUKOB
2 WE OWN THE NIGHT
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS

TARLAC

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 PASUKOB
3 GAME PLAN

STARMILLS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (045) 875-1927

1 PASUKOB
2 WE OWN THE NIGHT
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 ENCHANTED
5 LIONS FOR LAMBS
6 BOOGEYMAN 2

BACOLOD

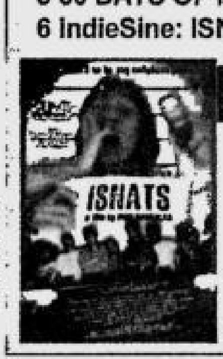
Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 WE OWN THE NIGHT
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
6 IndieSine: ISNATS

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 LIONS FOR LAMBS
6 BEOWULF



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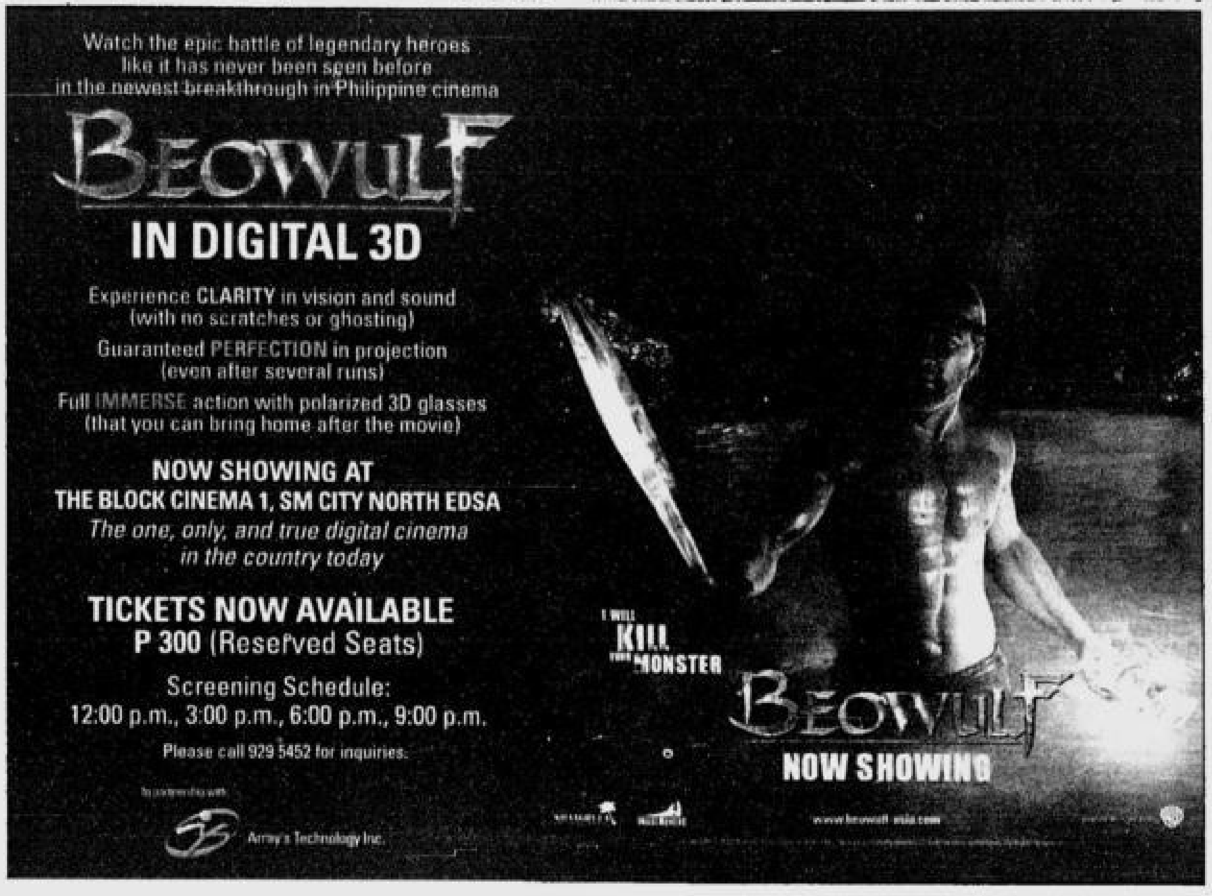

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3 FRED CLAUSE
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5 ENCHANTED/ BEOWULF
6 ONE MORE CHANCE

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1 BEOWULF (DIGITAL 3D)
2 PASUKOB
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 THE KINGDOM
5 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
6 RESERVED
7 HITMAN
8 ONE MORE CHANCE
9 FRED CLAUSE
10 ONE MORE CHANCE
11 PASUKOB
12 BEOWULF

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 THE KINGDOM
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 HITMAN
5 FRED CLAUSE
6 BEOWULF
7 ENCHANTED
8 BOOGEYMAN 2
9 LIONS FOR LAMBS
10 PASUKOB
11 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
12 THE GAME PLAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 FRED CLAUSE
2 ENCHANTED
3 HIDE & SEEK
4 HITMAN
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 BEOWULF
7 THE KINGDOM
8 PASUKOB
9 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
10 THE GAME PLAN
11 BOOGEYMAN 2
12 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 BEOWULF
2 THE KINGDOM
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 FRED CLAUSE
5 PASUKOB
6 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 PASUKOB
3 THE KINGDOM
4 FRED CLAUSE

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 HITMAN
5 FRED CLAUSE
6 ENCHANTED
7 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
8 BEOWULF
9 BOOGEYMAN 2

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 THE KINGDOM
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 PASUKOB
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 THE GAME PLAN
7 BEOWULF
8 ENCHANTED
9 HITMAN
10 30 DAYS OF NIGHT

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1 PASUKOB
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 HITMAN
2 BEOWULF
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB
5 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
6 THE KINGDOM
7 FRED CLAUSE
8 ENCHANTED
9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 THE GAME PLAN
11 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
12 WE OWN THE NIGHT

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 BEOWULF
2 THE KINGDOM
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

FROM PRODUCER MICHAEL MANN
AND DIRECTOR PETER BERG
UNDER FIRE. UNDER PRESSURE. OUT OF TIME.
JAMIE FOXX
CHRIS COOPER
JENNIFER GARNER
THEKINGDOM

FBI Special Agent Ronald Fleury (Jamie Foxx) has just received the assignment of his career: to assemble an elite team (Jennifer Garner, Chris Cooper, and Jason Bateman) and to go to Riyadh to hunt down and capture the terrorist mastermind behind a deadly attack on Americans working in Saudi Arabia. The feds have only one week to infiltrate and cripple a cell bent on jihad to western society.

No training would prepare Fleury and his team for the disorienting culture shock they face once inside this scorching foreign land: a byzantine maze of profiteering politicians and storefront terrorists. Bound by handlers who refuse to play ball with the U.S., the agents quickly find the local law enforcement more hindrance than help and soon grow uncertain of anybody's allegiance.

But when a sympathetic Saudi police captain helps them navigate Riyadh politics and investigate the true cause of the attack, Fleury finds an unexpected comrade-in-arms. In their lightning-fast attempt to crack the case, the partners's search leads them straight to the killers's front door. Now in a fight for their own lives, two teams on opposite sides of the war on terror won't stop until justice is found in The Kingdom.

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SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 ENCHANTED
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 HITMAN
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 THE KINGDOM
6 PASUKOB
7 FRED CLAUSE
8 BEOWULF

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 PASUKOB
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 BEOWULF

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 PASUKOB
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 THE KINGDOM
4 BEOWULF

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 PASUKOB
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE KINGDOM

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SM CITY TAYTAY 286-2502 to 04

1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 BALLS OF FURY
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 BEOWULF

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 THE GAME PLAN
2 RENDITION
3 LIONS FOR LAMBS
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 HITMAN
6 PASUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5340811

1 ENCHANTED
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 ENCHANTED
3 PASUKOB
4 THE GAMEPLAN

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 ENCHANTED
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 BEOWULF
2 ENCHANTED
3 THE GAMEPLAN
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS
5 PASUKOB
6 BEOWULF

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 BEOWULF
2 ENCHANTED
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 ENCHANTED
5 PASUKOB
6 BEOWULF

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 PASUKOB
3 BEOWULF
4 ENCHANTED

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 PASUKOB
2 BEOWULF
3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS
5 ENCHANTED
6 ONE MORE CHANCE
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 HITMAN
2 LIONS FOR LAMBS
3 THE KINGDOM
4 RENDITION
5 ENCHANTED
6 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
7 PASUKOB
8 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 PASUKOB
2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
3 RENDITION
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

Israelis...

From page I1

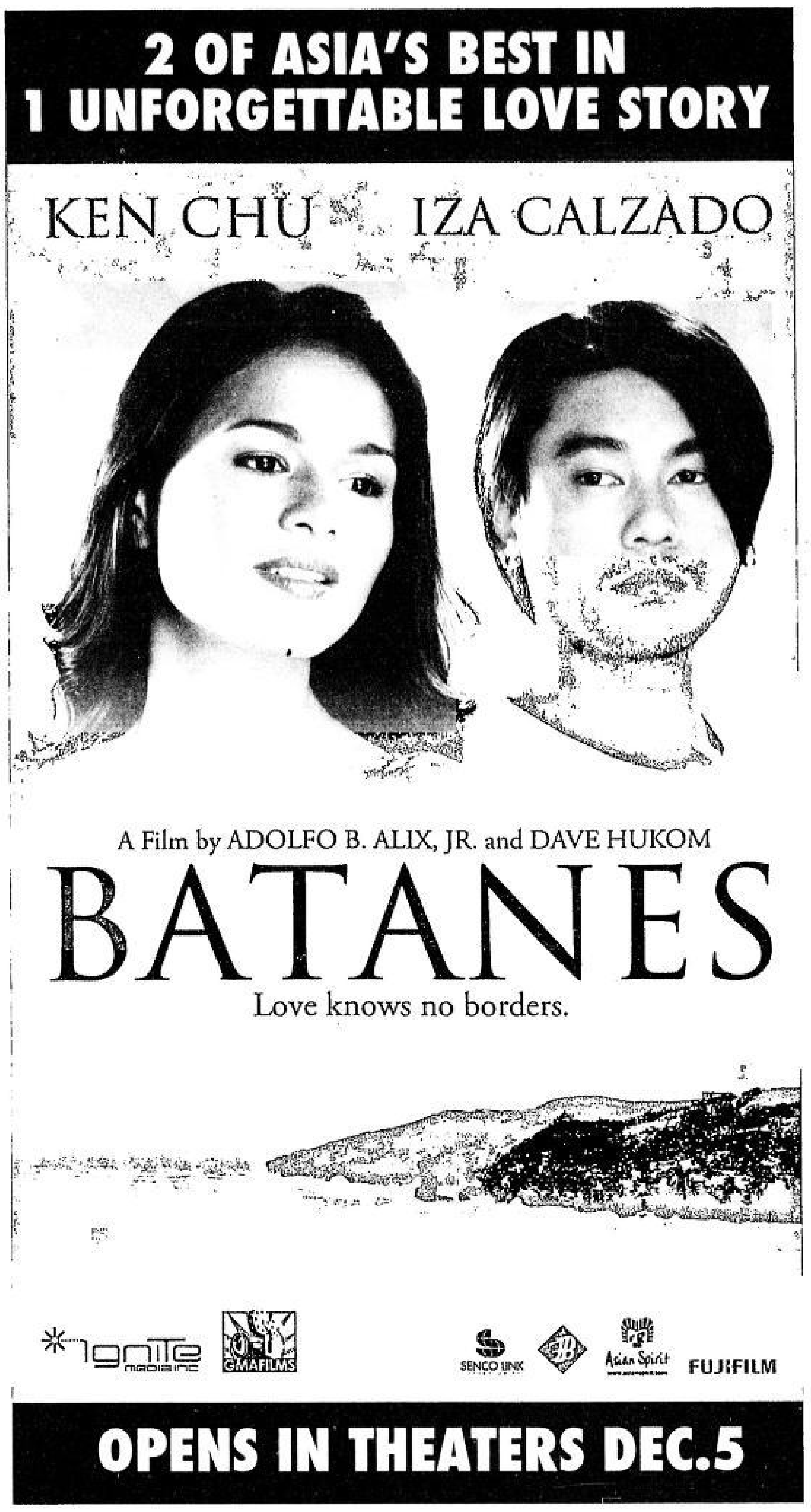
Two Israeli newspapers devoted nearly a full page to Seinfeld on Sunday, alongside news of the Mideast summit, a month-long teachers' strike, a weekend earthquake and other things that actually happened.

Seinfeld is being treated like visiting royalty—literally. Few entertainers get to meet both the Israeli prime minister and president, Seinfeld saw both, as well as touring the official Israeli Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem—the route taken by visiting world leaders.

The comedian himself seemed awed by his reception. He said it was quite a contrast to his last trip to Israel in 1971 as a 15-year-old volunteer on a kibbutz collective farm.

"I would be in the fields, and nobody wanted my autograph and nobody wanted to take their picture with me," he told reporters in Tel Aviv. "They just let me hack away at those banana leaves."

Seinfeld stopped in Israel as part of a world tour to promote his film, "Bee Movie," his first major project since the end of his TV series. Seinfeld wrote the script and stars as a bee who is unhappy with his life manufacturing honey for humans. *AP*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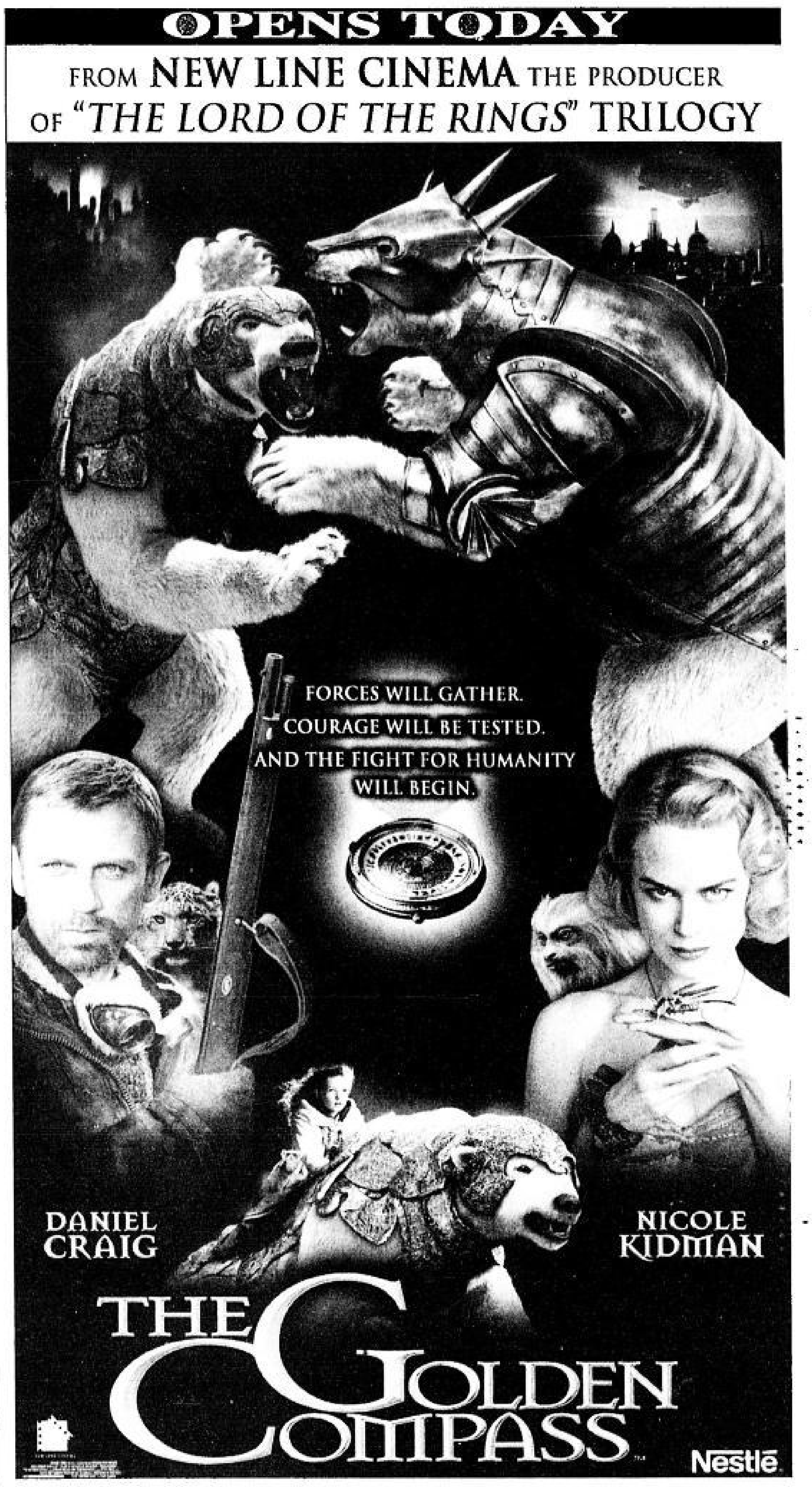
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AT THE CINEMAS

THX

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GLORIETTA 1	1 ENCHANTED	2 HITMAN	3 BEOWULF	4 ONE MORE CHANCE
GLORIETTA 4	1 ONE MORE CHANCE	2 BEOWULF	3 THX HITMAN GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE NANNY DIARIES/ ONE MORE CHANCE	5 ENCHANTED	6 ENCHANTED	7 THE GAMEPLAN
GREENBELT 1	1 HITMAN	2 ENCHANTED		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX HITMAN GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX ENCHANTED GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 ENCHANTED GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SUPER BAD GUARANTEED SEATS	5 BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX ENCHANTED	2 HITMAN		
	3 ONE MORE CHANCE	4 ENCHANTED	5 BEOWULF	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 ENCHANTED	2 HITMAN	3 ONE MORE CHANCE	4 BEOWULF
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ONE MORE CHANCE	2 BEOWULF		
	3 THE NANNY DIARIES	4 HITMAN	5 ENCHANTED	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 ONE MORE CHANCE	2 THE GAMEPLAN	3 HITMAN GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 THE NANNY DIARIES/ ONE MORE CHANCE	6 ENCHANTED	7 THX ENCHANTED GUARANTEED SEATS	

AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala Malls

glorietta	Sounds of Christmas: Christmas Chorale feat. Phil. Jesuit Community November 24; 6pm; Glorietta 4 Park
GREENBELT	Holiday Open Concert November 24 & Dec 2; 8pm; Greenbelt 3 Park
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Seussical The Musical November 23 to 25; 11am, 3pm & 6pm; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Metrobank Car Event November 24 to 25; Activity Center, Paseos and Rotunda Area
MARKET! MARKET!	Lifestyle and Vanity Outlet Sale November 19 to 23; Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents FIDDLER ON THE ROOF November 9 - December 16, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	WATER: THE MEDIUM by Juvenal Sanso November 24 to January 13, 2008; Ground Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Rhythm Academy: Sam Concepcion with the Augustinian Larks December 9; 6pm; Activity Center Rhythm Academy: Pops Fernandez and The UP Cherubim and Seraphim December 16; 6pm; Activity Center

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glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

OPENING THIS WEEK

Mona: Singapore Escort

Stars Iza Calzado, Liza Diño, Jake Macapagal, Brad Murdoch

Directed by Jowee Morel

Touted as a "sexy sociodrama," this indie film is produced by Bandit Films and Outline Digital Films. Calzado plays an OFW who ends up in the flesh trade in Singapore. Reports say the digital movie was shot on location in the city-state in less than a week. According to the producers, the film is in line with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to promote gender equality and woman empowerment. Opens Friday, Nov. 30.

Pasukob

Stars Ai-Ai de las Alas, Rufa Mae Quinto, Allan K., Antonio Aquitania

Directed by Wenn V. Deramas

A spoof of the suspense flick "Sukob," this comedy-thriller follows the adventures of two brides—one lucky, the other jinxed. Deramas says it's his first time "to combine wackiness with horror." He explains that his stars are from rival networks: "We've also proven that we can make something funny in 16 days!"

Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium

Stars Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman, Jason Bateman, Zachary Mills

Directed by Zach Helm

A 243-year-old toymaker (Hoffman) retires and leaves his magical store to an insecure manager (Portman). Claudia Puig of USA Today compares it to "the imagination of a lively child… on too much sugar." Susan Walker of Toronto Star comments, "It's pretty engaging, but the lives on display are less than mesmerizing."

Fred Claus

Stars Vince Vaughn, Paul Giamatti, Kevin Spacey, Kathy Bates

Directed by David Dobkin

Santa's black sheep brother (Vaughn) agrees to work in the North Pole, to escape jail. Carina Chocano of Los Angeles Times says, "[The] sweetest thing about [this comedy] is that the message about filial love feels genuine." Roger Ebert of Chicago Sun-Times asserts: "[It] has apparently studied 'Elf' and figured out everything that could have gone wrong with it." Kyle Smith of New York Post rants: "[It] lasts as long as winter."

"MONA: Singapore Escort"

The Kingdom

Stars Jamie Foxx, Chris Cooper, Jennifer Garner, Jason Bateman

Directed by Peter Berg

FBI agents investigate the bombing of an American housing project in Saudi Arabia. A.O. Scott of New York Times points out: "As hair-raising as it is, it is also curiously soothing in its depiction of American competence." Chris Vognar of The Dallas Morning News concurs: "Smoothly directed, [this action film] has a polished sheen." Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly differs: "Shameless … [it] ignores consequence."

The Namesake

Stars Kal Penn, Jacinda Barrett, Irrfan Khan, Tabu

Directed by Mira Nair

Based on Jhumpa Lahiri's novel, this drama on "cultural assimilation" chronicles the struggles of Indian-born expats in New York. Peter Travers of Rolling Stone raves: it's "a generational family saga everyone can relate to, and Nair gives it her special magic." Ella Taylor of Village Voice notes: it's a "study in hot and cold as it moves between Calcutta and Queens." Michael Wilmington of Chicago Tribune calls it "a profound and beautiful film."

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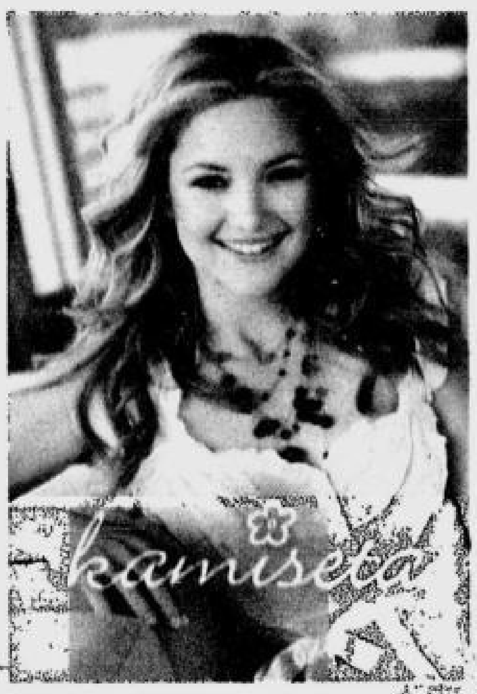

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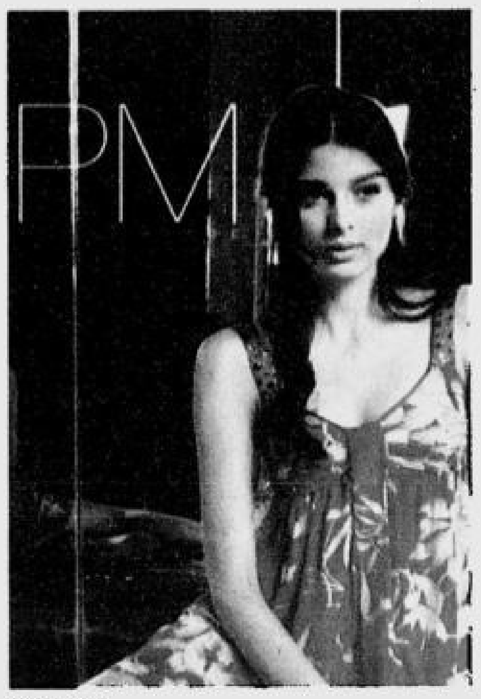

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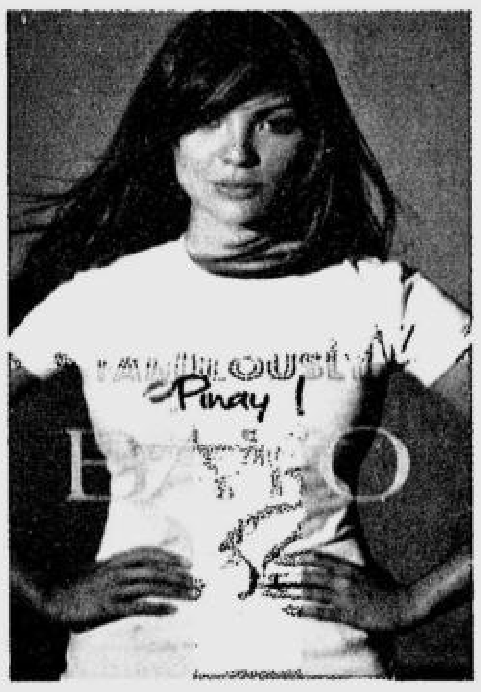

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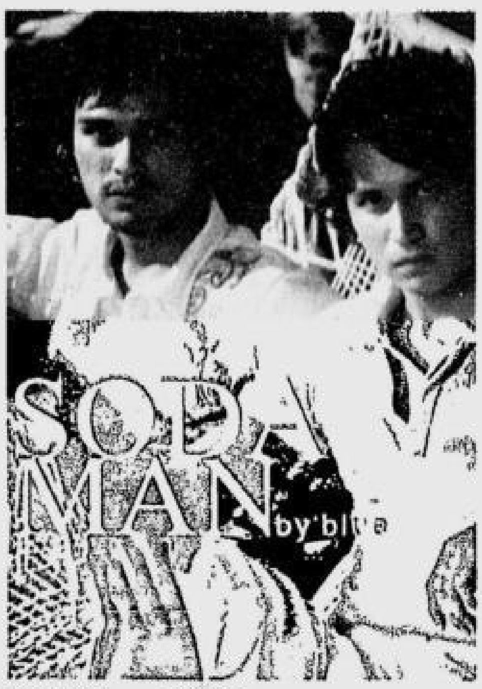
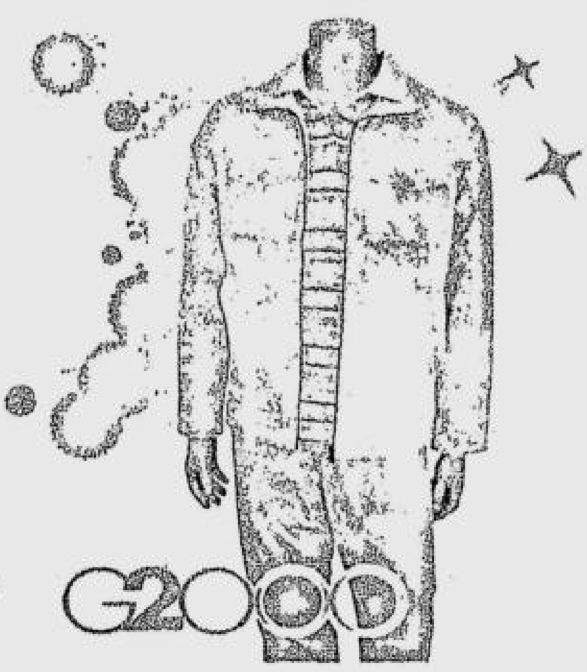

SODA MAN
by'bl'a

2ND FLOOR



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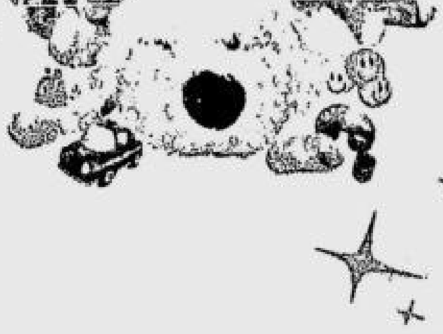
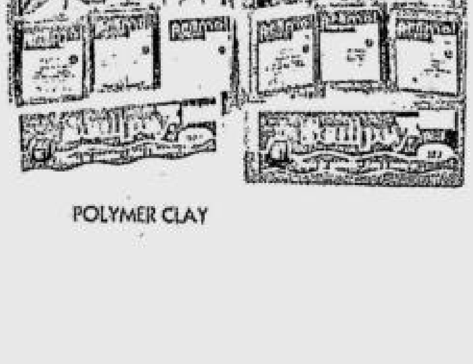
Redeem your kind of stuff...
this Christmas!!!



Deovir
Helping you Create a Masterpiece


BAKE & BEND Clay
POLYMER CLAY

POLYMER CLAY

tronix imaging center
Digital Photo Printing

Digital Photos Printed in Seconds!
P2.50 per Print
5th Floor, SM City Manila

SM SUPERMALLS

EMBER 26 2007

ePower
Telecomshop

SMART
Connect
SMART

Let's begin our friendly connections

Napaka-AFFORDABLE
maging Sun Prepaid Retailer!

P533 lang

May Instant Negosyo ka na!

Sa P533,
makakakuha
ka na ng:

- 1 Sun Xpress Load Retailer SIM
- P300 load sa Xpress Load Retailer Wallet
- 2 Sun Prepaid Super Value SIMs
- Retail merchandising materials

Available at
The SUN Shop

Sun Cellular Prepaid

Globe™
Abot mo ang mundo.

ChristmasShop for Techie Thrills

SHOP NOW AND AVOID THE HOLIDAY RUSH.

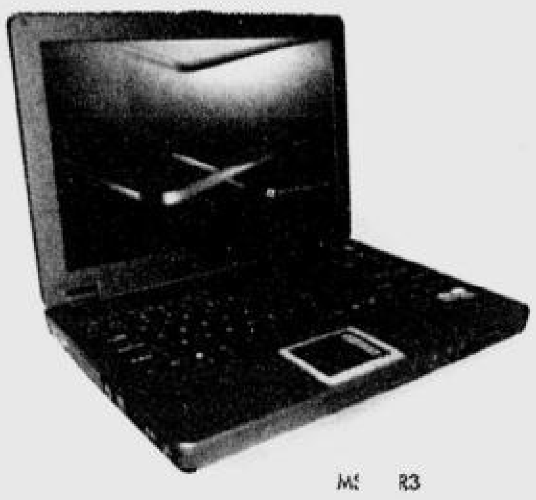
SM City MANILA

Chizzy

Chizzy SM Manila Branch

Internet surfing	Network online gaming
Typesetting	Scanning
CD Burning	Printing
Prepaid Card	Xerox
Fax service	

PC corner

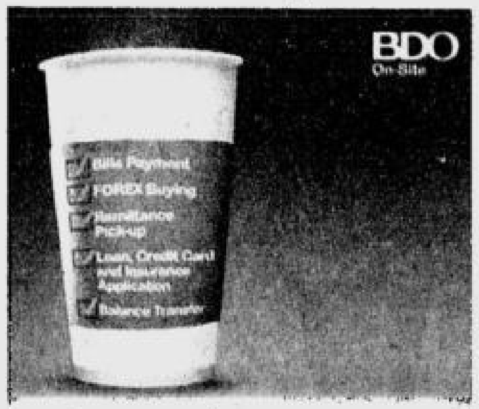


SILICON VALLEY
computer centre

TOSHIBA
M200-E43C

ELECTROWORLD

Handy holiday convenience


BDO
On-Site
Bills Payment
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Loan, Credit Card and Insurance Application
Balance Transfer

Convenience
served fresh daily!

We find ways

Basta LBC,
MAKAKARATING!

LBC
TRANSPACK

INTERNATIONAL & DOMESTIC DOOR-TO-DOOR COURIER SERVICE

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HARI NG PADALA!

With over 650 branches nationwide

Send Money Nationwide
For only P99 send upto P5,000
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APTEK T300 DIGITAL CAM CORDER	OLYMPUS 270 DIGITAL CAMERA
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DIGITAL VIDEO CAMCORDER	SHAKEPROOF ANTI BLUR MODE
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PLUS	PLUS
FREE 256 SD CARD	FREE PICTURE FRAME 5R
FREE PICTURE FRAME 5R	FREE CAMERA CASE
FREE CAMERA CASE	FREE 1G XD CARD
1 YEAR WARRANTY	

3rd Floor
(near SM Cinemas)
Tel. No.: 4007907

PHOTOLINE
plenty to smile about!

Merry Christmas and a happy New year...
MR. QUICKIE

WATSONS
15% OFF ON ALL WATSONS ELECTRICALS

SBARRO
MUGNIFICO COMBO, TEA & DESSERTS
WITH FREE MUG PROMO

SHAKEY'S
OCTOBER FEAST

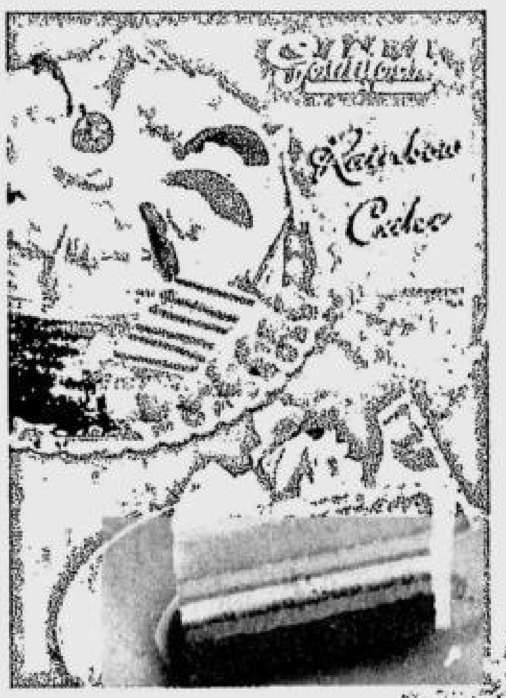
SM SUPERMALLS

ChristmasShop for Festive Flavors

ON A HOLIDAY DINING ADVENTURE

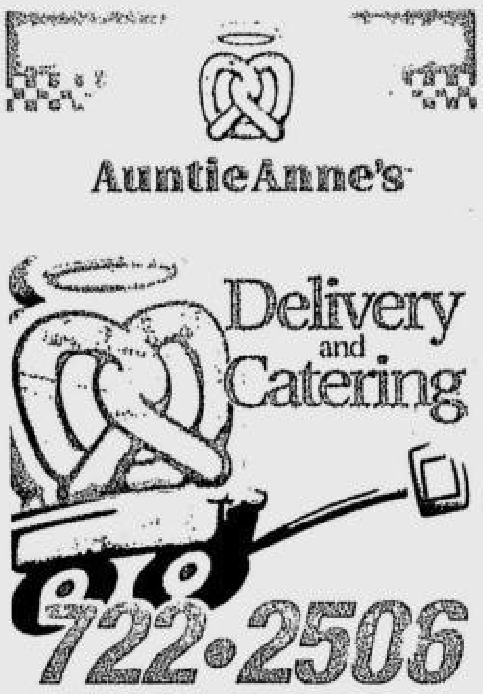
SM City MANILA

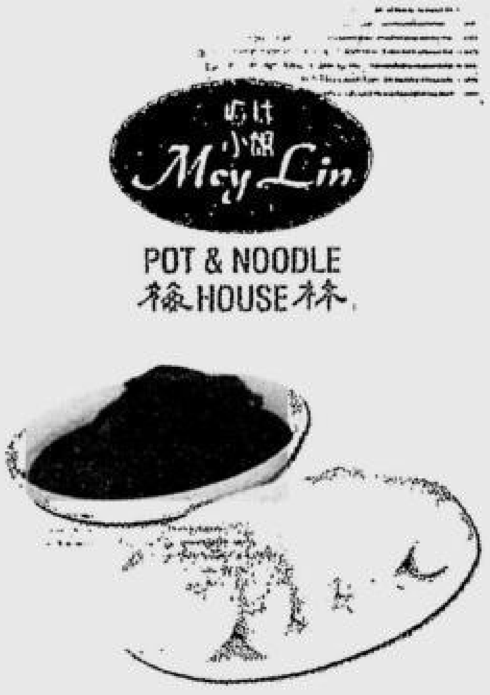
Salazar
ASSORTED HOPIA


Goldilocks
Rainbow Cake

THE FRENCH BAKER

Black Forest
Whatever the celebration,
It's more beautiful with a
Red Ribbon


AuntieAnne's
Delivery and Catering
722•2506


Mey Lin
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BK STUNNER FREE SUNDAE!
FRIED CHICKEN STUNNER MEAL
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BK SINGLES STUNNER MEAL
P99 ONLY!
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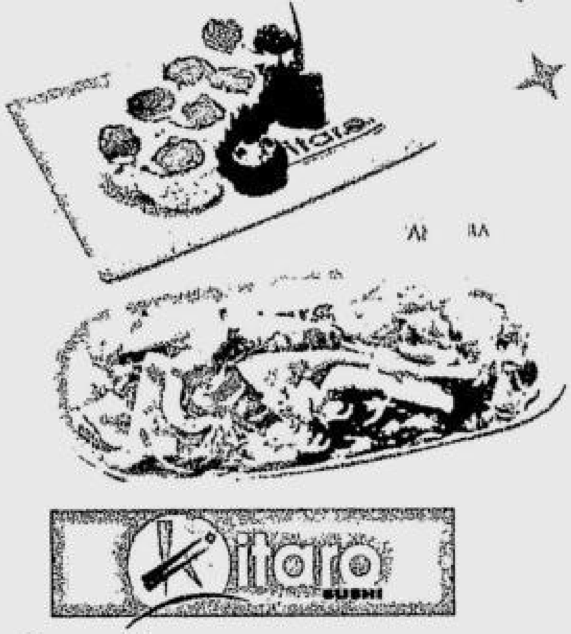
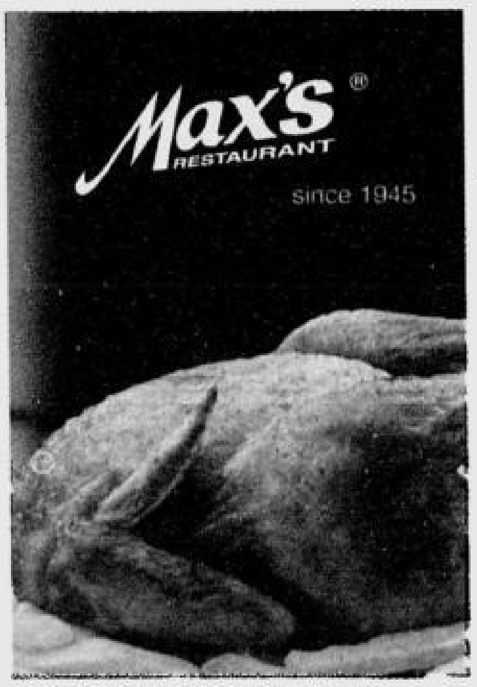
VISIT US AT THE UPPER GROUND FLOOR

TOKYO TOKYO
FOLLOW YOUR HUNGER
SUMO MEALS


Kitaro SUSHI

It's gotta be
Shakey's
Great Holiday Experience

Phở Hòa
MARINATED PRAWNS W/ GRILLED PORK ON RICE & LEMONADE


Max's RESTAURANT
since 1945

2N R

Chi Mangia Bene, Mangia Sbarro
Big Delicious Fast
sbarro
Pizza Pasta Salad
(Those who eat well, Eat Sbarro)

up next at SM City MANILA

Payoff
DEC 1 . Sat 11am, Event Center, LGF

KAY SUSAN TAYO
DEC 2 . Sun 11am, Event Center, LGF

RPinoy Family Event feat. Erik Santos
DEC 8, Sat 1pm, East Atrium, UGF

TAMIYA MINI 4WD TOURNAMENT
DEC 9 . Sun 11am, Event Center, LGF

MANILEÑONG PASKO07
IKALAWANG PAHID
ON-THE SPOT PAINTING COMPETITION
DEC 15. Sat 10am - 4pm, East Atrium, UGF